

**MOBILIZING  
FOR  
CHAOS**

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**THE STORY OF THE  
NEW PROPAGANDA**

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“We have strengthened the power of the State as an expression of our common will to live and have exalted it above everything else.”





## CONTENTS

I. Definitions: Nationalism Rampant	1
II. Nervous System and Psychosis	18
III. Diplomats in the Saddle: The Future of Communications Politics	57
IV. Radio Armaments	85
V. Nationalism and the Corruption of News	108
VI. The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw	169
VII. Propaganda on All Fronts	198
VIII. Conclusion: Toward a New Dark Ages?	209
Notes	215
Index	223



# MOBILIZING FOR CHAOS

## CHAPTER I

### Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Minister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, summoned three hundred Berlin journalists to his office and announced the promulgation of a press law which made no secret of the government's intention to make the entire press of Germany a sounding board for official propaganda. "The National Press Law is the most modern journalistic statute in the world!" Dr. Goebbels cried. "I predict that its principles will be adopted by the other nations of the world within the next seven years. It is the absolute right of the State to supervise the formation of public opinion."

This utterance of Dr. Goebbels was only in part a prophecy. The principle which he stated to the docile journalists of Berlin was already incorporated into the laws of half the nations of the world and had been generally accepted as one of the realities of national existence. Soviet Russia and Italy had shown how not only the press, but every other instrument of communication and education, could be brought under the centralized control of the state and made to build a national mass psychology favorable to the interests and ambitions of the na-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

tional government. In most of the nations of the world, the right of the state to censor and regulate public utterances in print or speech was accepted as absolute in time of war and other national emergency, and had been invoked so often in peacetime that sedition against the national state virtually disappeared, and the principle of freedom and individualism in public utterance became a sentimental survival of old-fashioned ideologies, tolerated only because it was ineffective against the overwhelming propaganda of national unity. Whether admitted or not, the rights of expression of minorities were everywhere maintained by only the slenderest of safeguards, and the whole tendency of political development was constantly to increase the control of the public opinion of national populations for extremely nationalistic ends.

The success of the principle that the state has a right to monopolize the "education" of every citizen for nationalistic ends is one of the signs of surge in the tide of nationalism. Historically considered, the World War, which at one time was believed to be the culmination of an age of nationalism, and out of which would arise internationalism or some other loyalty than the old one for the political state, was only an episode in the progress of national sovereignty. It is true that in the latter part of the War period, and in the first years of the 1920's, certain political and social

## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

ideals became current which threatened to check the steady upsurge of nationalism. A new kind of international organization, a League of Nations, was launched in the hope that nationalistic rivalry could be submerged in a loyalty for a new kind of supranational political structure based upon universal brotherhood and justice. Certain other international and local movements, of which the World Communism of the Third International and Separatist movements in districts of the old national states are examples, tried to offer substitutes for the cult of nationalism. These movements have not been entirely exterminated. They enjoyed considerable popularity immediately after the War, and still exist, but they are no match for the tide of nationalism which is once more the most omnipresent and omnipotent force of our civilization.

When one considers the intensity and universality of love of country, and the multitudinous activities, local, national, and international, that are carried on in its name, it seems almost inconceivable that it could be of comparatively recent date. The word "nationalism" as used here denotes a belief that loyalty to the idea of a national state is greater than all other loyalties. This state of mind leads one to believe in the intrinsic excellence of his nationality and gives one zeal for the "mission" of the nation. The sense of nationality, that is, kinship

## Mobilizing for Chaos

in culture and especially in language, is not new; nor for that matter is patriotism—literally, love of place; but the conscious and deliberate attempt to fuse these two sentiments and redraw the political map of the whole world on national lines and to instill in the consciousness of all human beings a supreme loyalty for the respective nationalities and states is a phenomenon of the last few centuries.

Modern nationalism arose during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, and came to full flower in the nineteenth. The history of the rise of nationalism may be found elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> and it is only necessary here to sketch in a very general way some of the causes and characteristics of national patriotism. Before the Renaissance, the loyalties of citizens were in the main local or tribal, on the one hand, or imperial, on the other. A man might recognize his allegiance to some local community or chieftain, or to some all-embracing concept such as the Roman Empire or the Catholic Church, but allegiance to the modern state as we know it today was the product of later evolution.

Among the influences which started Western civilization on the course of nationalism were the growth of vernaculars and of a sense of linguistic kinship which evolved when the old universal languages of Greek and Latin were superseded by vernacular literatures. The appearance of various

## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

kinds of heretical movements in different parts of Europe began the disintegration of the concept of Christian unity, and laid the foundations of religious differences between national states. The rise of monarchies, on the other hand, furthered by strong and ambitious individuals who wished to aggrandize their own power and glory, tended to merge small principalities into larger units, and kindled a sense of pride in royal achievements. On the economic side, the growth of trade, and the rivalry of monarchies in discovering and appropriating new lands in America, Asia, and Africa, made it necessary for governments to concern themselves more and more with the building up of a system of taxes and duties and bounties, as well as the creation of navies and armies for the protection of national commerce, all of which laid the basis for national mercantilism.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries contributed the intellectual preparation for the meteoric rise of nationalism which was ushered in by the French Revolution. Rationalism weakened the authority of international Christianity, and men sought substitutes for supernatural religion in natural science and natural law. For a time it seemed that the popularity of concepts of universal, natural law, and human brotherhood might create cosmopolitanism or supernational humanitarianism, but the rapid political and social

## Mobilizing for Chaos

changes which began to occur at the end of the eighteenth century decreed otherwise.

The French Revolution exerted enormous influence in popularizing the principle of national self-determination, which had already motivated the revolt of the Dutch against the Spaniards in the sixteenth century and the revolt of the Americans against England in the 1770's. The French Revolution put the principle of national self-determination into operation on a grand scale. Political democracy was substituted for monarchy, class privileges were abolished, local and provincial distinctions were swept away, state religion was substituted for international Christianity, and all French-speaking people in Europe were united in a brotherhood of Frenchmen whose primary allegiance was to everything implied by the national name—France, *la patrie*. In a burst of enthusiasm for nationalistic France, the French proceeded to introduce measures which would inculcate a fervent loyalty for *la belle France* in every French breast, and, further, embarked missionary expeditions, sword in hand, to convince the rest of the world of the blessings of the French brand of nationalism.

To the French Revolution we owe much of the nationalistic ritual of national flag, national anthem, and national holidays. The French Revolution insisted upon linguistic uniformity. It broke



## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

up the old linguistic divisions of France into arbitrary departments, and inaugurated a system of compulsory state-supported and state-directed schools in which national patriotism was taught with the national language. The French Revolution also introduced the idea of universal military service, on the theory that a Frenchman's paramount loyalty was to *la patrie*, and that he should therefore be prepared at all times to lay down his life for the national honor. The French Revolution also raised the capital, Paris, to the status of all-powerful fountainhead of national political power and nationalistic culture.

Events in the nineteenth century quickened the growth of nationalism. The Industrial Revolution, while it did contract the world and establish mercantile ties between nations, proceeded almost entirely along nationalistic lines, and nations became as antagonistic and competitive commercially as politically and culturally. The age of Romanticism provided an intellectual and emotional spur to nationalism. Romanticism exalted folk-language, folk-literature, and folk-culture; it turned historians to making folk-history; it set scholars and scientists to work justifying national distinctions in such various fields as anthropology, law, music, gastronomic habits, sexual rites, and religion. The whole trend of culture was, therefore, to emphasize

## Mobilizing for Chaos

and justify national peculiarities and to exalt them proudly as signs of national superiority.

The nationalistic principles and practices inaugurated by France spread rapidly during the nineteenth century. There occurred a series of wars of national self-determination out of which arose the modern states of Italy, Germany, Greece, and Belgium. The greatest war of national self-determination was the World War, which created Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and other national states, each with its national education, national journalism, and national armaments. The fever spread to other continents, and forged nationalistic states in South America, North America, Asia, and Africa.

It is worthy of note that the rise of political democracy was in no way an obstacle to the growth of nationalism. On the contrary, political democracy actually increased the ardor of nationalistic enthusiasm. The old loyalty to king or emperor or home was transferred to the nation, which was greater than any individual, sect, or party. Identified with the will of God, the nation was endowed with an immortal soul which was supposed to survive all the vicissitudes of political and economic existence. It is significant, indeed, that the upper middle classes, the bourgeoisie, which won political democracy by defending their class interests against autocrats, have been the staunchest advo-

## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

cates of extreme nationalism. They were quick to see the usefulness of nationalistic enthusiasm in furthering the interests of the commercial and professional classes. The ranks of tradesmen, industrialists, teachers, and preachers have supplied many of the most zealous nationalistic leaders, and the bourgeoisie still exert a preponderate influence upon nationalistic ambition, although by this time the upper classes and the proletariat have also been involved.

Economic interest is not, however, sufficient to explain the phenomenon of nationalism. It is true that the Industrial Revolution, the introduction of capitalism, and the shift of sources of control within the states of the Western state system were accompanied by an unprecedented efflorescence of national patriotism, and that the "fatherland" became a symbol of the social cohesion of the bourgeoisie. Yet economic interest does not account for the flags, the national anthems, and the adoration of St. Frederick the Great, St. Mazzini, St. Bolivar, and St. George Washington. Men do not voluntarily go out and allow themselves to be blown to pieces on a battlefield for the Krupp Eisen Gesellschaft, La Société Générale des Parfumeries Françaises, or the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. If there were, and are, basic economic motives for nationalistic loyalty and self-sacrifice, they have been far outstripped in the popular mind

## Mobilizing for Chaos

by sentimental and emotional appeals. One sacrifices for an all-powerful, all-demanding, all-glorious nation which is on the plane of deity. Indeed, it is difficult to explain nationalism except as a religious phenomenon. One worships and adores, one tries to commune with the immortal spirit of one's country, one tries to make himself a part of a power (nationalism) greater than himself, one reinforces his faith by constant repetitions of the rituals of saluting, singing, and pledging allegiance to the flag, one gladly immolates himself on the noble altar of country. Nationalism is the religion of the twentieth century, and save for a small number of exceptions, it is universally more potent in determining the average man's thought and behavior than Christianity.

That the fanaticism of nationalism has been used to further economic interests is, of course, self-evident. The point is not that there is not an economic explanation of nationalism, but that economic interest in itself is not sufficient to explain the deeds that are done in the name of nationalism. With the development of nationalism there appeared an extreme sensitivity as to national honor, national rights, and national interests. It is presumed in the modern national state that the economic interests of the dominant classes are the national interests and should determine national policy. It is also presumed that the national state

## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

has a sovereign voice over its own affairs, and that it can pass any kind of law it chooses to satisfy nationalistic feeling at home, even though the law may create ill-feeling abroad. It is also presumed that the state should encourage national mercantilism and insure its profits by making the encouragement and protection of commerce a matter of national policy.

In an age of expansion brought on by the Industrial Revolution, these fundamental tenets of nationalistic faith were bound to bring about increased bellicosity and friction. Economic groups in the nation must be protected, even at the cost of discriminatory and provocative measures such as tariff laws and import quotas. The protection of citizens, such as salesmen, missionaries, and tourists, who voyaged in foreign parts, became a duty of the state, and any injury done to these transients was considered an attack upon the national honor. Moreover, when domestic industry needed raw materials which could be obtained most satisfactorily from outside the country, or when manufacturers and farmers needed markets in which to dispose of their commodities and produce, it devolved upon the national state to obtain these markets and insure the protection of merchants, even when the state found itself in competition with other mercantile states or when the state to which it planned

## Mobilizing for Chaos

to extend the market was a reluctant or hostile customer.

The result has been the growth of a new and perhaps more subtle and menacing imperialism than the old imperialism of ambitious potentates who wished to extend their realms primarily for their own personal glory. The theory that the growth of strong, independent, sovereign national states whose limits have been defined more or less by cultural and linguistic similarity would put an end to aggression and war has been exploded by the long chronicle of friction and blood traceable to the economic imperialism of modern nations. National interests required opportunities and advantages in trade, and how could these opportunities be obtained save by building up a state powerful enough to protect the national interests and be respected abroad? With the present anarchical condition of the world they could not well be obtained otherwise, and the result has been the building and maintenance of large armaments on the land, on the sea, and in the air. It is doubtful, however, whether militarism would be nearly so extensive in modern times if only economic interests were involved. In the mind of the average man, indeed, the sentimental and emotional appeals of nationalism are probably more effective justification for militarism than the desirability of securing a market for Texas oil in China or for Japanese textiles in central

## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

Africa. There is, for instance, the irredentist cause, or the desire to redeem lands where the national wars of self-determination and the periodic re-marking of national frontiers by peace conferences have failed to solve the problem of minorities (and, in some cases, majorities) of the population which have cultural or linguistic ties with nations of which they are not politically a part. It is especially true of the so-called "backward" countries, where the advancing tide of economic imperialism has been preceded by missionaries of nationalistic-religious culture and justified by the nationalistic-racial theory that the invaders are bestowing a mighty blessing upon the little brown brothers or little black brothers by teaching them the white (nationalistic) way of life. Only incidentally, or perhaps not at all, is the profit motive apparent to the average nationalistic citizen.

The results of the imperialistic urge are bellicosity, suspicion, and mistrust. When any nation greatly increases its armaments it becomes a matter of national honor for other nations to increase their armaments proportionately. It should be observed that a nation always arms ostensibly for "defense." Yet the argument over the identity of the criminal "aggressor" in the World War shows how impossible it is for nationalists to distinguish between offensive and defensive acts. Japan justifies its imperialistic course in Manchuria as "de-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

fense" of the Japanese Empire, and the French talk earnestly of a "defensive war" which would take the form of an invasion of Germany. When a nation's prestige is at stake, when a nation's honor has been sullied by insults to its citizens, when Germans in the Tyrol are longing for union with the Pan-Germanic state, and when Hungarians in Czechoslovakia are unredeemed, or when a slice of Manchuria is a matter of national life or death, it matters little whether an act of war is offensive or defensive. One does not stop then to quibble over the meaning of words.

The vicious fruits of the nationalistic will to power and honor in international relations are matched by the fruits of nationalism in domestic affairs. Nationalism breeds an intolerance that denies to the citizen the right to do or say, or even to think, anything which runs counter to the nationalistic creed and to nationalistic ambitions. Turks are no longer butchered in the name of Christ, nor are Huguenots and Quakers burned because of slight differences in interpretation of Christian doctrine; it is even rare for a subject to be punished for personal disloyalty to a monarch. But intolerance has not been diminished during the ages; it has only been transferred from the spheres of religion and feudal fealty to the sphere of nationalism. The brunt of intolerance today falls upon those individuals or groups who are believed to feel alle-



## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

giance to some principle or interest which is not completely identified with the nationalistic will.

Hence the popular antagonism to an international religion such as Roman Catholicism, which insists upon the dangerous doctrine that spiritual loyalties transcend national frontiers. The professional patriots issued solemn warnings that Al Smith in the White House would receive his orders direct from the head of a "foreign" church in Rome. Indeed, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, such as the brotherhood of all races and men, peace on earth, humility and self-sacrifice, run counter to the new religion of nationalism, and must either be ignored or explained away by sheer sophistry. There are indications that traditional Christianity may be completely abolished as heretical in Western states, since Dr. Goebbels has already revised scripture to further the paganism of Pan-Teuton mythology, and the Russians are attempting to substitute the mythology of Lenin and Company for Orthodox Christianity. The history of the church during the last hundred years has been marked by the steady advance of "laicization" (nationalization) and the breaking up of international churches along national lines. That this development has been accompanied by a decay of faith in the old religions and by an increase in belief in the new religion of nationalism is apparent in time of peace as well as in war.

## Mobilizing for Chaos

The same intolerance has been visited upon the Jews, since Judaism, like Catholicism, is an international religion and is ostensibly an organization of Jewry that ignores national lines. The deep antagonism to the Jew arises from the feeling that he is essentially an alien, with divided or alien loyalties, and can never be assimilated and transformed into a 100 per cent nationalist.

In the field of social and economic movements, nationalistic intolerance has been visited upon socialists, communists, anarchists, pacifists, and even the advocates of the supranationalistic League of Nations. The hatred of radicalism may spring from the clash of the economic interests of the classes, but it is obvious that radicalism is persecuted by emotional appeals to the spirit of nationalism. Socialists, it is said, take their orders from the foreign Second International, composed of believers in cosmopolitanism who want to undermine national power. Communists take their orders from Russians and Jews in Moscow. Pacifists would destroy the means by which the nation maintains its honor and dignity and its ability to protect its interests against foreign enemies. The advocates of some form of supranational government such as the League of Nations would destroy national honor and authority by reducing all national states to a condition of prosaic vassalage to a power which is based upon the abominable doctrine that all na-

## Definitions: Nationalism Rampant

tions are equal in ability and rights. In any case, the radicals are branded as "un-American" or "un-German" or "un-French," and are the butt of persecutions instigated by roused patriots.

The menace of our time is the insidious encroachment of the intolerance of nationalism upon all the channels of approach to the human mind. The method of enslavement has proceeded from vassalage and physical force to the regimentation of thought. The nationalistic states of today have recognized the fact that the surest and safest form of control is that which regulates the kind of information and opinion which is available to national subjects, for a subject by conviction is a stronger defense than a subject by force. Foremost among the channels of information which determine man's thinking is the world-wide organization of electrical transmission devices which carry the burden of news. News is the vital factor in international life, and the control of it is at the core of the problem of nationalism. The following chapters will show, first, how the physical equipment of rapid communications, including telegraph, cable, and radio, has been made servile to the demands of nationalism; and second, how news, the matter most vital to the formation of public opinion, has been tampered with and exploited by nationalism for the deliberate purpose of warping the human mind.

## Nervous System and Psychosis

THE extent to which technological inventions have increased the speed and number of contacts between people of the same nation and people of different nations during the past hundred years is an amazing tribute to man's ingenuity. Until modern times, cultural contacts were made mainly by diplomatic envoys, invading armies, traders, seamen, and a few travelers, but in general these contacts were restricted to a relatively small part of the population, and their effects appeared slowly. Even printing was of limited usefulness as a means of communication until the invention of modern mechanical and electrical equipment and the creation of literate publics by popular education. Today, on the other hand, face-to-face contact has been enormously accelerated by fast trains, automobiles, steamships, and airplanes, and intellectual and cultural intercourse has been made almost instantaneous, in most parts of the world, by a nervous system fabricated out of telegraph, telephone, and radio.

The speed of communication made possible by the whirling wheels and ramifying bands of steel, iron, and copper, and by radio waves, has been held

## Nervous System and Psychosis

by some to mean that the world has greatly decreased in size, and that the shrinkage has created a world-community which is closely-knit and possesses the quality of "neighborliness" which rural families might have if the distance between their homes were reduced from ten miles to ten yards. In a physical sense, perhaps, such a shrinkage has occurred, but the contraction of the world in terms of time and space has been accompanied, paradoxically, by an intensification of political and cultural rivalries which has prevented the growth of the community feeling which one might have been led to expect.

There is considerable irony in the fact that the acceleration of rapid means of international communication should have occurred during the time when such imperial or universal political concepts as the Holy Roman Empire and the Universal Catholic Church were falling rapidly into decay. The energy which produced the Industrial Revolution, of which technical progress in communication is an off-shoot, also produced nationalism, and it is doubtful whether the rapid growth of communication would have been possible without the spur of nationalistic competition. During the nineteenth century the great nationalistic powers of the West entered into a communications race, which, like the armaments race, was based upon the deep-lying compulsions of nationalistic honor and prestige as

## Mobilizing for Chaos

well as upon military necessity. Any development in communication in any country was observed with jealous eyes across national borders, and immediate steps were taken to make even more impressive progress.

Domestically, electrical communication created a powerful device for uniting and nationalizing populations in which lingered the vestiges of medieval localism. It was a potent aid to nationalistic education, the nationalistic army, the nationalistic church, and the nationalistic press in their services to the inculcation of patriotism. It became the nervous system through which nationalistic impulses were carried to every corner of the state. In international affairs, the control of electrical communication was of inestimable value to mercantile and political imperialism. Control of communication meant the control of markets and the highways of trade. In the political sphere, it represented a vital link between the nationalistic capital and provinces or spheres of influence in other parts of the world. Likewise was it the indispensable accessory of *Kulturpolitik*, providing channels for the spreading of nationalistic culture in other lands. And, finally, it was of great strategic importance in time of war.

The usefulness of electrical communication to national governments made it inevitable that the right of governments to control communication

## Nervous System and Psychosis

should be accepted as inalienable. The development of communication systems was either a matter of government enterprise solely, or of private enterprise backed by the government and controlled by the government. Outside of North America (United States and Canada) most of the world's continental telegraph and telephone wire, approximately 7,000,000 miles, is in government hands, and cable and radio resources are either owned and operated outright by the government or operated by private interests under government control. Even in the United States, as will be seen, the rights of private enterprise in electrical communication are rapidly disintegrating and may shortly disappear. The control of communication is, in brief, accepted everywhere as one of the prerogatives of the nationalistic state and indispensable to its existence.

Great Britain, because of its world-wide imperial and commercial interests, was quick to recognize that the control of communications was synonymous with world power, and has therefore had a predominant rôle in the expansion of cable communication. The emergence of Great Britain during the nineteenth century as the major factor in cable communication was also due to the British monopoly of gutta-percha, used for cable insulation.<sup>1</sup> Having recourse to diplomacy, Great Brit-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

ain negotiated with other powers and obtained concessions in cable laying which gave her virtual monopoly in this industry.

British supremacy in world affairs until the World War was a striking object lesson in the value of communication control to the nationalistic state. London became the cable center of the world. This meant commercial supremacy, for she exercised a virtual monopoly on the transmission of quotations of market and currency prices. London became the hub and center of world mercantilism. In addition, she became the news center of the world, and was, therefore, unusually sensitive to change everywhere. This gave her merchants and bankers an advantage over the merchants and bankers of other countries, and helped to reinforce her position as the economic and political capital of the world. In the sphere of political influence, England was able to develop effective contact with her outlying possessions as well as to spread English political and commercial ideas in foreign lands served by British cables.

Somewhat tardily, other great powers began to recognize, toward the end of the nineteenth century, the strategic significance of international communication systems. Germany and France entered the lists of competition with Great Britain, although they were never able to challenge British supremacy. Various individuals and companies



## Nervous System and Psychosis

in the United States had shown great enterprise in developing intercontinental cable connections from the very beginning of the business, but it was not until the Spanish American War in 1898, which awakened the United States to its importance as a world power, that the country entered the field on an extensive scale.<sup>2</sup>

National rivalries grew more intense as the World War approached. Smaller nations, alarmed by the monopolization of international communication by the great powers, endeavored to build their own small systems to secure independent channels to their colonies and spheres of influence. Japan, rapidly becoming a world power, had dreams of becoming the cable crossroads of the East and dominating the communications of the Asiatic continent as Great Britain had dominated the West. Before the readjustment following the World War, Britain had approximately 51 per cent of the cables of the world, the United States 26½ per cent, France 9 per cent, Germany 7½ per cent, Denmark 3 per cent, and Spain, Italy, and Japan 1 per cent each.<sup>3</sup>

The strategic importance of international cable connections and their susceptibility to propaganda uses were clearly demonstrated during the World War. Wire communication of all kinds between the Allies and the Central Powers ceased with the beginning of the conflict. With her technical

## Mobilizing for Chaos

knowledge of the international cable system which she had helped to lay, Great Britain was able to isolate the Central Powers so completely from communication with the outside world that a virtual cultural blockade was clamped down. On the night of November 20-21, 1914,<sup>4</sup> the German-owned cable from the Spanish islands of Madeira to Liberia was cut, and on September 13, 1915, the German-owned cable from Liberia to Pernambuco in Brazil was cut. Service on the German-owned cable from New York to the Azores was interrupted early in the War, and in November of 1917, the French cut the line five miles from the American coast and spliced the seaward segment to a line to the French hut at Manhattan Beach.<sup>5</sup> The Allied powers were left with complete domination of the cables of the world. Germany was forced to rely upon slow and uncertain methods to present her case to the world and to communicate with her agents in neutral countries. Messages routed through the neutral countries adjacent to Germany were subject to the censorship of the enemy powers who controlled the ocean lanes. Wireless had not been developed to the point where it was of much practical use in long distance communication.

Great Britain took full advantage of the power she had acquired by her enterprise in cable laying. Even before the War, the right of the government

## Nervous System and Psychosis

to interfere with cable communication for national ends had been assured, for rate blanks carried the statement that "The dispatches of the Imperial [British] Government shall have priority when demanded. The cable must not at any station employ foreigners and the lines must not pass through any office or be subject to the control of any foreign government."<sup>6</sup> The position of England as the cable clearing-house of the world made it possible for her to supervise the bulk of the news of Europe destined for consumption in belligerent and neutral countries beyond the sea. The vigor of British control was illustrated by the treatment of William Randolph Hearst, whose papers supported the German cause until the United States entered the War. Hearst's news service was frequently interfered with, but the extremity of British retaliation occurred in October of 1916, six months before America entered the War, when the cables and mails were closed to Hearst and his correspondents expelled. Hearst's London representative was instructed to tell him that the prohibition would be effective at once unless Hearst would give his personal assurance that all dispatches would be printed exactly as received after passage through the British censorship. When he heard the news Hearst said, "I am going to tell them to go to hell," whereupon the British made good their threat, giving as official grounds "the continued garbling of

## Mobilizing for Chaos

messages and breach of faith on the part of the International News Service [the Hearst service].” The French, Portuguese, and Japanese governments followed suit, and the gag on the flow of news was so complete that Hearst resorted to the pirating of news from a rival press association.<sup>7</sup>

The experience of the World War showed the vital connection between propaganda and the control of physical equipment by which the propaganda is distributed. The extent to which the defeat of the Central Powers can be attributed to the fact that they were effectively bottled up from the standpoints of news and propaganda is incapable of accurate determination, but from the experience of the War the conclusion can safely be drawn that the greater the number of channels of communication under a country's control, the stronger the position of that nation in the event of war. The principle was clearly demonstrated in the instance of the Orient's rôle in the War. Electrical communication with the Orient during the World War was inadequately developed, as it is now. The few cables in existence came almost immediately into the hands of Great Britain and its allies, with the possible exception of the Dutch line running to the Dutch East Indies. The Allied Powers were therefore in a position to present none but unfavorable news of Germany to the Far East. The views of the millions of the Orient were manufactured

## Nervous System and Psychosis

for them by the censor offices without allowing the German side of the controversy to be presented at all. The gagging of Germany was not only detrimental in wartime, but had a disastrous effect upon the German cause when the nations of the world gathered around the peace table in Paris to decide the fate of Germany. The unfavorable view of Germany, stimulated by propagandists and censors under the protection of military agents in the cable offices, made it impossible to build a peace dictated by an informed and just world opinion.

A glance at international agreements covering telegraph and cable communication before the War will show how little sense of international responsibility entered into the negotiations. No effort was made to insure a free flow of world news unhampered by the threat of nationalistic censorship and exploitation. If there existed any consciousness of a world community of nations bound to each other by physical and spiritual ties, one would expect the diplomats to guarantee the world-community the inviolability of its own nervous system. As a matter of fact, the international conference which met at St. Petersburg in 1875 and drew up a Convention which, with modifications, is still adhered to, reinforced the nationalistic rights of states over their cables rather than restricted them. The Petersburg Convention applied only to the operation of cables in time of peace. Fifty nations,

## Mobilizing for Chaos

including the great powers of Europe, but not the United States, agreed to abide by the Convention, which covered a variety of operating questions from the method of indicating the time of day to the rate between Hedjaz and Yemen.<sup>8</sup> Neither at St. Petersburg, nor at later conferences in London, Paris, Berlin, Budapest, and Lisbon, was any move made to free cables from national interference. Treaty arrangements were made by diplomats in the same spirit as other pre-War diplomatic negotiations. The convention of 1884 (Berlin) provided that whoever voluntarily or negligently cut or injured a cable should be punished, but the enactment of specific punitive laws was left to the contracting parties. Although the penalties provided were in most cases severe, the law worked badly.<sup>9</sup>

The protection of international cables in time of war was covered by Articles 53 and 54 of The Hague Convention in 1907 Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and Articles 8 and 9 of the Convention Concerning the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers.<sup>10</sup> The Hague provisions, including the one that "submarine cables connecting an occupied territory with a neutral territory shall not be seized or destroyed except when absolute necessity requires," were observed about as scrupulously as the other "rules of war" laid down by the diplomats. International communica-

## Nervous System and Psychosis

tions were interrupted with little attention to the rights of neutrals, and the men who made the peace terms ignored the article which declared that "appliances for the transmission of news . . . may be seized . . . but must be restored and compensation fixed when peace is made." Cable connections were seized, used, and disposed of, as the strongest nations willed.

It is surprising that the World War did not produce some classic utterance equivalent to "let me control the cables of the world, and I care not who controls the guns." England, through "Dora" (the censorship authorized by the Defence of the Realm Act), controlled virtually all communication between America and the Central Powers. Because cable messages had to pass through England, instead of censorship at the source there was censorship in transit, which is much more objectionable to newspapermen because they are usually unable to find out, at least without great delay, which of their dispatches have been thrown into the waste basket or tampered with. American correspondents protested all through the War against the doctoring of their cable dispatches by British censors.<sup>11</sup> Sir D. Brownrigg, in the *Indiscretions of the Naval Censor*, pointed out that the caption "Passed by Censor" was "never any guarantee of truth. It merely meant that in my judgment the statements could not be of benefit to our enemies, or harmful

## Mobilizing for Chaos

to the interests of this country." This meant in plain language that the news for America was being given a propaganda slant favorable to England while it was in transit through the cable offices.

News originating in one of the Central Powers or in one of the bordering neutral states met a similar fate. The British censors either threw the dispatches out or revised them to suit British purposes. G. A. Schreiner, an Associated Press correspondent who worked in the Central Power states or in the bordering neutral states during the War, received the following message from the London office of the A. P. on September 21, 1914:

"It is now apparent that a very large part of your work is going to waste, at least so far as the cable is concerned. For example your telegram No. 134 was all killed, 135 was nearly all killed, 136 all killed, 138 came through in full, 139 and 140 were all killed, 142, 143, 144, 145 and 146 came through in full, 147, 148 and 152 were all killed."<sup>12</sup> When Schreiner was covering the unsuccessful attempt of the British to get through the Dardenelles in 1915, he had the choice of sending his story over the Constantinople-Berlin-Holland-London route, and having it thrown out at London; or via the island of Tenedos, where the Allied Fleet was stationed; or via Greece, in which case



## Nervous System and Psychosis

it would have had to pass through French hands before crossing the Atlantic.<sup>13</sup>

The argument that the mails were fairly free from British interference had little weight, because news, in order to be effective, must be timely. A German version of affairs in Europe had little influence several weeks after the official British versions had been published and accepted in America as the true versions. As a matter of fact, letters were frequently opened and confiscated. Schreiner, in the case mentioned above, reported that nothing could be learned of the fate of dispatches Nos. 137, 141, 149, 150, and 151, because the censors in London had also taken the carbon copies of them from the mail. Wireless proved to be a relatively ineffective means of communication between America and the Central Powers during the War. The stations at Sayville and Tuckerton in America were available to the Germans, but these stations were not completed until after the War broke out, and the French and British immediately tried to have them shut down on the grounds that The Hague Convention made wireless communication illegal between a station on neutral territory and the military or naval forces of a belligerent power, unless the station had been in public use before the War commenced. Finally the American Government took over the stations to bring an end to the argument. Ambassador von Bernstorff could send ci-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

rations, 20,000 miles of the German cables passed to the five principal allied and associated powers. The conference in Washington at the close of 1920 gave Britain the former German cable running from the Azores to Halifax, Nova Scotia; and France the cable between the Azores and New York as well as the German South Atlantic System running to Casablanca, Dakar, and Monrovia in Africa and to Pernambuco in Brazil. The segment of the latter system running between Monrovia and Pernambuco is now lying derelict at the bottom of the South Atlantic, but the French operate the remainder of the cable from Brest.

The struggle for German Pacific cables is an illuminating instance of post-War conflict over communication power. Germany had, in conjunction with the Dutch, laid a Pacific cable system centering in the island of Yap; one branch ran to the Dutch East Indies, one to Shanghai, and one to the American island of Guam, where it connected with the cable between the United States and China. President Wilson hoped the nations would accept his plan to internationalize the island of Yap to serve all cable interests regardless of nationality, but Japan, which had obtained the "C" mandate of the League of Nations for former German possessions above the Equator, flatly refused to surrender control over this cable crossroads of the Pacific. The Pacific question was put over to

## Nervous System and Psychosis

the Washington Arms Conference in 1921, where a round table discussion failed to produce an agreement. Japan and the United States then resorted to direct negotiation. The United States acquiesced in the destruction of any genuine internationalism by recognizing the Japanese mandate, and Japan conceded the American claim to equal cable and radio rights on the island of Yap. The actual division of the German cables went over to another conference in 1922. Japan won the strategic line from Yap to China, which she had diverted to her own territory as an act of war; the United States secured the segment from Yap to Guam; and the Netherlands secured the section terminating in the Dutch East Indies.

The result was of great international importance, and was striking testimony to Japan's intention to control the communications of the Far East. America's transpacific influence was hindered. Japan increased her control over communication between China and the outside world. With British help, Japan has consistently opposed any effort to open the closed door in Far Eastern communications. The Japanese policy has discouraged any attempt to extend the inadequate cable facilities across the Pacific. It has apparently been Japan's intention to exercise a monopoly in the control of intelligence between the Far East and the rest of the world, and in this ambition she is only profiting

## Mobilizing for Chaos

by the experience and example of the island empire of the West, Great Britain, which enjoyed a strategic position in respect to continental Europe analogous to the position Japan enjoys in respect to China. The dominance of Japan in Far Eastern communications has recently been challenged by the transpacific thrust of American radio as well as by the nationalistic ferment in China, but there is no reason to believe that Japan will abandon her effort to maintain supremacy.<sup>15</sup>

American enterprise has been especially successful in the laying of cables to South America. For many years a British monopoly of cable rights in Brazil prevented an expansion of American lines down the east coast of South America and necessitated the burdensome and politically hazardous routing of messages via London. Since the World War, however, the rapid expansion southward of the American companies has greatly increased the speed of intercourse between North and South America and enabled the United States to oppose European cultural and commercial expansion in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. The All-America Cables, a subsidiary of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, operates nearly three times the north-south cable mileage of all the other companies combined.

The present balance sheet of cable facilities shows more than two-thirds of the cables of the

## Nervous System and Psychosis

world in the possession of Great Britain and the United States, with Great Britain owning about 163,000 nautical miles and the United States about 97,000 miles. Of the world total of 352,445 nautical miles of cable, fully 87 per cent is in the hands of Great Britain, the United States, France, and Italy. France possesses about 29,000 miles of cable, and Italy about 15,000. Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, China, Spain, Norway, and a few other countries are in possession of small segments of the cable network.

A condition of stability in the control of communication, with the Anglo-Saxon countries dominant, might have been maintained at least temporarily had it not been for the sudden rise of a new form of communication, radio, which has greatly complicated the world conflict for power and enormously accelerated the race of electrical armaments. From the point of view of internationalism, it would be difficult to find an irony more acute than the history of radio communication. Here was a means of international intercourse which seemed to be literally as free as the air. Wireless impulses ignored mountains, oceans, and deserts as well as political frontiers. Radio required a much smaller outlay for equipment and operation than cables, and in radio the political control of cable routes

## Mobilizing for Chaos

tion by German military and commercial interests. France replied with a world-wide radio scheme of her own in which colonial and military ambitions were the paramount factors. The German and French systems were designed to combat each other for supremacy in spheres of commercial influence elsewhere in the world, and especially in South America. With the war clouds rapidly darkening, still another consideration spurred the continental powers to grandiose schemes of radio armament—England's dominance in the field of cable communication. Here was a means whereby, without the high costs entailed by the installation of cable equipment, England's control of international communications could be circumvented.

Great Britain refused to sit back and allow her continental rivals to challenge her supremacy. She formulated a world-wide radio project of her own in the "All-Red Chain" which was well under way in 1913 when the British Marconi Company received governmental permission to complete it. The plan provided for two routes from England to Australia, and like the German and French plans, it was decidedly nationalistic. The British government envisaged a radio program in which supremacy of the air would supplement supremacy of cables.

Then, on June 28, 1914, the assassin's bullet at Serajevo plunged the European nations into war.

## Nervous System and Psychosis

Curiously enough, the immediate effect of war as far as European nations were concerned was not to stimulate the development of radio communication. One might have supposed that the belligerent nations would immediately seize upon this kind of communication not only for the purveyance of military intelligence, but for propaganda purposes at home and abroad. The reasons for the retardation in the extension of radio facilities were both physical and strategical. In the first place, the pre-War networks were mainly theoretical, and quite unrealizable in actual practice. Distances between stations were enormous considering the state of radio at the time. Moreover, the spark transmitter then in use gave extremely uncertain results, and radio service was far from being the steady and dependable instrument which the belligerents needed. Engineers therefore gave their energy to activities which promised more immediately practical results. The Allied countries had a special strategical reason for holding up the development of radio, since the cable system of the world fell immediately into the hands of the British and there was no point in encouraging the development, at that time, of a form of communication which might be more difficult to control. So long as Great Britain was able to isolate the Central Powers and at the same time maintain a rapid flow of intelligence among the Allied Powers by means of submarine

## Mobilizing for Chaos

cables, it was superfluous to seek the advancement of radio.

The temporary abeyance of radio development in Allied countries was America's opportunity. The preoccupation of Europe with the War placed America in the lead in industrial research. From the point of view of communications, the War made America's need for new channels of communication especially acute. The outbreak of the War in 1914 left the United States virtually isolated as far as international communication was concerned. America was forced to depend mainly upon British-controlled cables for international intercourse, and as the War continued and America moved closer and closer to participation, a greater and greater need was felt by political and military leaders for a means of communication which would be free from foreign intervention and which would allow the United States a degree of independence in international negotiations.

America's swift rise as a radio power was in a measure due to the invention of the so-called Alexanderson high-frequency alternator, which greatly increased the dependability of radio communication and introduced the system of radio frequency which makes it possible to tune broadcasting and reception to the particular wave lengths desired. The development of the alternator was hastened by the War. The groundwork of an American radio



## Nervous System and Psychosis

system, moreover, had been laid before America entered the War, since the United States Navy had put into operation a high-power transcontinental and transpacific chain to provide communication between the Navy Department and the forces afloat without the least dependence upon foreign-owned and foreign-controlled submarine cables.

The day after the United States declared war against Germany, a Presidential Proclamation directed the navy to take over all radio stations in the United States and its possessions with the exception of those already under control of the army. The most important acquisition of the navy was the American Marconi Company station at New Brunswick, N. J., in which an Alexanderson alternator had been installed. With the installation of a 200-kilowatt alternator, the New Brunswick station became the most important in the world, and served the American government continuously during the War. This was the station which, in direct communication with the German station at Nauen, served President Wilson for the peace preliminaries which led to the signing of the Armistice. It was also used for radio telephone communication with the President's ship en route to France in the spring of 1919.

Other facilities had to be found for the enormous amount of communication required between the government at Washington and the land and air

## Mobilizing for Chaos

forces in Europe and the wide-flung navy. The German station at Sayville, L. I., which, under American Navy supervision, had been Germany's chief means of communication with the outside world from 1914 to 1916, was diverted to government uses. A powerful station for American use was erected near Bordeaux, France, and a large receiving station to handle west-bound traffic was built at Bar Harbor in Maine. Here and there, under navy auspices, smaller stations sprang up. Land and ship stations were equipped with improved transmitting and receiving devices as fast as they were invented. By appropriation or outright purchase, the navy department acquired and unified the radio resources of the United States and succeeded in giving a distinctly national tone to American communication with the outside world. By the end of the War not a single radio station in America was foreign owned with the exception of the Marconi high-power chain on the Pacific coast.

America then had fully awakened to its radio power. American business saw the end of its commercial isolation and wanted to compete aggressively for world markets. It was in no mood to accept a "party line" arrangement in international communications. New markets were opening, new European states had been created which desired cultural and commercial intercourse with America. An All-American communication service on a

## Nervous System and Psychosis

world scale immediately suggested itself as a means of fostering good will and paving the way for good business.

America's determination to maintain her position in radio was manifest in the negotiations for the Alexanderson alternator after the War. The General Electric Company was ready to supply the alternator to any purchaser, and the British Marconi Company, which represented the only existing market, was ready to place orders for the alternator amounting to five million dollars. President Wilson, who was in Paris at the time, sent General Electric an urgent message requesting it to decline to sell its inventions to British Marconi or to any foreign company. The President sensed the obvious intent on the part of the British to dominate international communication and transportation. The British already dominated the cables; domination of radio would give them monopolistic control over the transmission of intelligence throughout the world. Admiral Bullard, Director of Naval Communications, presented the President's argument to Owen D. Young and other General Electric officers in the New York offices of the company on April 5, 1919. Bullard argued that the sale of the alternator to foreign or private interests would represent an irreparable loss to American national interests. Retention of the device, he said, would give America complete control of radio communi-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

cation not only in the United States but in Central and South America as well. He outlined a wireless policy for North and South America not unlike the Monroe Doctrine. The argument was a persuasive one to American business interests, and the essential nationalistic lines of radio development were emphasized in General Electric's decision to decline British Marconi's offer.

Government interference for nationalistic ends went much further. A local market for American inventions had to be provided, and the government was responsible for assuring the creation of an American radio organization big enough and financially powerful enough to compete with the national radio set-ups abroad. Owen D. Young had the sympathetic coöperation of the United States government when he began the organization of the Radio Corporation of America. This colossus of the electrical industry, joining the General Electric Company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the Western Electric Company, the United Fruit Company, and later the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, brought under one central organization the principal radio inventions and radio research facilities of the American people. With the acquisition of the property and rights of the American Marconi Company, it came to possess a virtual monopoly over American radio. A 100 per cent national, it was a

## Nervous System and Psychosis

fit servant for those interests which sought, in the period following the War, to extend commercial and cultural influence abroad.

The rivalry of the two great Anglo-Saxon nations for world power in communications now entered a new phase. Great Britain, alarmed by the inroads American radio was making in its cable business, sought new means to combat the menace. A means was found in the development of the "beam" or directional wireless, which, by utilizing short waves, actually projected messages more efficiently over distances exceeding 2,000 miles than the cables. In 1924 the British Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company secured a contract from the government for an Empire chain to provide direct communication with Canada, Australasia, South Africa, and India.<sup>16</sup> American radio supremacy was now in turn threatened.

The success of the beam wireless hastened the unification of British communication power. From 1912 on, the Imperial Government and the various colonial governments had sought to organize all forms of communication into a world-wide imperial system, but it was not until the cheaper service of the beam wireless cut down the revenues of private and governmental cable companies that it became imperative to harmonize the interests of

## Mobilizing for Chaos

the various competing services under a central governmental authority.

The agitation for a unified system resulted in the Imperial Wireless and Cable Conference of 1927-28, out of which was created a merger or holding company called Cables and Wireless, Ltd., with an operating subsidiary called Imperial and International Communications Company, Ltd. This super-combination brought together in one organization all the principal competing companies, and gave the British government a unity of action in the communications field and an important administrative advantage over the American companies. The intention of the British government to use the merger for the accomplishment of national and imperial ends was not for one moment in doubt. In sponsoring the organization, government representatives at the Imperial Communications Conference said: "It is to be agreed: (a) that British control of all the companies must be guaranteed; (b) that the Governments may assume control of the cable and wireless systems in time of war or other national emergency; (c) that the Fighting Services are entitled to build and work cable or wireless stations for their own purpose, but not for commercial purposes," and that the British Post Office "will reserve the right to conduct the external telephonic services of Great Britain."

Here was a communications giant which the

## Nervous System and Psychosis

United States, in spite of its commanding position in radio and the rapid expansion of its cable services, could not match. Virtually alone among the nations of the world, the United States maintained the policy or pretence of restricting the control of the national government over private communication companies. Whereas the other nations have frankly recognized the right of the state to absolute control over its communications systems, and have appointed central planning and regulating bodies identified with the government, the United States has clung to the theory that private enterprise should be allowed to operate freely in the field of communication, with no more interference from the government than is necessary to protect the public welfare, prevent unfair competition, and give protection abroad.

As a matter of fact, the divorce of government from the communication business in the United States has always been more apparent than real. The Interstate Commerce Commission has exercised control over telephone and telegraph systems. Regulation of radio has been allocated to a special Federal Radio Commission<sup>17</sup> which has, in final analysis, a very complete authority over the radio industry. The protection of American communications abroad has always been the particular care of the Department of Commerce and the diplomatic agencies of the Department of State. Gov-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

ernment interference with communication businesses during the World War, and the illuminating incident of the prevention of the sale of the Alexanderson alternator, show that the government has in fact drastic authority over communications when the occasion demands.

Nevertheless, the rivalry of private corporations for profit in the communication field has prevented American communications from presenting a completely united front against foreign competitors. At the present time the communication resources of the country are in the hands of a few giant corporations whose interests, sometimes interlocking and sometimes competitive, present a confusing illustration of modern industrial ramification. The leading companies are the Western Union Telegraph Company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the Radio Corporation of America, and the various subsidiaries operated by the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.\*

The British Imperial Merger of 1927-28 had the effect of sharpening American agitation for a similar combination along national lines. The president of the Radio Corporation of America, General J. G. Harbord, said in 1928, referring to

\* A brief inventory of the activities of these companies, indicating the chaotic duplication of services created by free competition, may be found in note 18.



## Nervous System and Psychosis

the British merger: "The American answer to this challenge can only be made by submitting the great communication companies, both cable and radio, to proper government regulation as to rates while exempting them from the operation of the anti-trust laws and permitting unification here and thus meeting the thrust of unification from abroad." The proposal of a merger under control of the government has met with stiff opposition from political and business groups that look with disfavor upon the growth of monopolies and the encroachment of Federal authority into business affairs. Yet President Hoover, no radical in political and economic theory, proposed to Congress the study of a unification plan, and hearings on the subject were held by the Seventy-first Congress. Proponents of a merger plan hold that some arrangement will soon have to be found for harmonizing the interests of various competing companies so as to prevent, for example, the cutting into the revenue of cable companies by cheaper radio services, the wasteful duplication of services, and the excessive overhead and "accounting" costs which accompany private competitive organization. More fundamental, however, than any technical or operating problem, is the problem of presenting a united front in international communications to protect American national interests. For at the foreign end of every communication circuit there is a communication

## Mobilizing for Chaos

monopoly either under the control of a foreign government or owned and operated by the foreign government itself. The American government may be able to make American companies compete against each other in the domestic field, but it has no power to interfere with foreign monopolies and enforce a private competitive system on a world scale. The result has been that the various American companies, competing against themselves as well as against foreign monopolies, have been played off, one against the other, by the foreign monopolies, and forced into positions whereby they are compelled, to save themselves, to make contracts advantageous to the foreign governments and discriminatory against themselves and the American public. In addition, America's bargaining power at international communication parleys has been weakened by the fact that American delegates have represented a variety of divided and antagonistic communication interests, whereas foreign delegates have spoken with the authority of the national government which in fact they represent.

The political philosophy of Washington during the Hoover administration made the merger proposal an unpopular one. Certain business interests, and especially those identified with the American Chamber of Commerce, took a vigorous stand in opposition, invoking the White Act and the Sherman Anti-Trust laws. Among the leaders in the

## Nervous System and Psychosis

communication businesses, officers of the Radio Corporation of America and the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation have shown a disposition to entertain some merger plan, but Newcomb B. Carlton, president of Western Union, has energetically resisted any attempt to interfere with rugged individualism in the telegraph business. Opponents of government ownership or control point to the danger of political domination and interference, and claim that government interference in business always results in "red tape," uneconomical operation, and the discouragement of initiative, technical research, and advancement. They also claim that government ownership and control in foreign countries has resulted in service inferior to ours, and that an amalgamation of foreign communication interests such as the British is an unwieldy bogey and no real threat to American national interests.<sup>19</sup>

At the present moment there is more prospect than ever of some kind of merger of American communications. The New Deal policies of the Roosevelt administration have committed the country to economic nationalism and a program of national planning in which amalgamations and government control or outright ownership will play an increasingly important part. At the invitation of the President, the Secretary of Commerce, Daniel C. Roper, and an interdepartmental committee made a study

## Mobilizing for Chaos

of American communications to be used as a basis for new legislation to amalgamate and regulate all forms of electrical communication.

The so-called Roper report<sup>20</sup> recommended the setting up of one central governmental agency to regulate the communications systems of the nation. Government regulation should either be administered, the report said, by a communications commission of a quasi-judicial character, or placed directly under the jurisdiction of a Cabinet officer. The report disclaimed any intention of initiating a program that would interfere with the sacred rights of private ownership, advocating the continuance of ownership in these enterprises in private hands for the time being, but it is difficult to see how the kind of regulatory set-up advocated by the committee would fail to produce a communications monopoly under strict Federal control. Experience both in this country and elsewhere shows that the creation of cartels and monopolies has almost inevitably resulted in stronger governmental participation for the protection of the public interest, and in many countries this participation has reached the point of actual appropriation of the industries by the government. The Roper report itself mentioned the possibility of monopoly exposing the communications merger in America to foreign influence, which would necessitate strict government supervision.

## Nervous System and Psychosis

Elsewhere the report emphasized the desirability of a merger for strictly nationalistic purposes. It recommended that laws should insure ownership of American communications by American stockholders only, and operation by American directors, officials, and personnel. While it said that encouragement should be given to American-owned communication enterprise in foreign countries, it urged that the merger of foreign-controlled, or partly foreign-controlled, communication services with those of American companies should be strictly prohibited. And lastly, it called for the organization of all communication facilities under government supervision fully to meet "the requirements of national defense."

The suggestions of the Roper committee were incorporated in bills prepared by Senator Dill and Representative Rayburn, chairmen of the Interstate Commerce Committees of the Senate and House. Hearings were held, and, after some slight modifications, the bills were passed. The Federal Communications Commission, with regulatory control over radio, telegraph, and telephone, is now a fact. As in the past, the Chamber of Commerce and other business interests energetically combated the proposed legislation. Yet the political atmosphere at Washington is far different from what it was when the Hoover proposal was broached. The measures made into law by the Dill-Rayburn bills

## Mobilizing for Chaos

are symptomatic of a changing philosophy in respect to the rôle of government in the field of communications. Greater government participation, with a franker mobilization of communication resources for nationalistic purposes, is within sight. The effects of this tendency, not only in the conflict of national communication armaments in the world sphere, but on the regimentation of intelligence within the national borders, will be discussed in a later chapter. It is imperative at this time, however, to recall the millions of human beings in the United States and other countries who are the pawns of nationalistic thrusts and pressures, and who are dependent upon the communication facilities of the world for the information which governs their ideas and behavior. The control of communication systems is no airy abstraction for board rooms, institutes of political theorists, and economics textbooks. It is an intensely practical matter that affects day-by-day security and well-being. After we have examined the uses to which communication facilities have been put by the nationalistic states, we may perceive more clearly how the world's nervous system as it now functions represents a menace to society of the utmost seriousness—and all the more serious to most people because the psychosis from which it suffers is unperceived and unrecognized.

## Diplomats in the Saddle: The Future of Communications Politics

At first glance, it might seem that the far-flung electrical circuits had established a world-wide functional organism, comparable to the nervous system or arterial system of the human body, and that the existence of a controlling intelligence similar to the human brain would become almost inevitable. The analogy of the world's nervous system to the human nervous system working as a functional unit is, unfortunately, untenable. There exists no world-pattern of political and ethical ties comparable to the network of the communications systems. The nervous system, in other words, possesses no proper body to contain it. Technological progress has so far outstripped political progress that the world is putting its international nervous system to uses which are the very opposite of international.

We have already seen that the basic motive of nations in their communications enterprises has been national self-interest. National interests have dominated the extension of service by telegraph, telephone, and wireless. Dominant positions in world communication have been won by a half

## Mobilizing for Chaos

dozen world powers who are rivals and eye each other with hostility and suspicion. In the frantic scramble for power, anything left over for the common good in international life becomes as uncertain and intangible a thing as the doctrines of equality or fraternity in national life. No directing social consciousness on a universal scale has paralleled the physical organization of communications.

International coöperation has been necessary in technical matters, such as methods of operation, language, codes, and rates, but the tendency of international parleys has been to assure the maximum of nationalistic expansion and control with the minimum of international regulation. In the sixty years of such "coöperation" in electrical communication, virtually no progress has been made in the direction of the development of common responsibility for the maintenance of telecommunications as a world utility. No effort has been made to guarantee the free and unrestricted use of communication channels in peacetime or wartime. Nations retain absolute authority over the political uses of their various segments of the world system. Nations may, in fact, completely stop communication of any kind, if they deem the provocation sufficient. Communication facilities may, in time of war, be seized and appropriated as lawful prizes, as happened in the case of German cables and radio



## Diplomats in the Saddle

stations in the World War. Small or neutral nations therefore continue to have no guaranty that the nerves of international communication will not at any time be severed, and they are at the mercy, as far as the free flow of intelligence is concerned, of a few nationalistic powers struggling for communication supremacy.

Moreover, any matters pertaining directly or indirectly to politics and national interest continue to be negotiated between countries via the old channels of diplomacy. No nation has yet shown any inclination to compromise its rights over its own national communication systems by submitting to the judgment of delegates seated around an international conference table. There are no open covenants, openly arrived at, in communications diplomacy, as far as political rights are concerned. The state acquiesces in certain technical arrangements without the least question of its right to withdraw from these arrangements at will. Every communication system, whether publicly or privately owned and operated, rests upon a franchise from a national government. Everywhere, governments jealously guard the licensing power over such matters as the control of routes in the case of cables and radio installations in the case of wireless, and the interchange of messages between different systems. There exists no international au-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

thority that would dare to challenge these jealously guarded national prerogatives.

The first international telegraph Convention, drafted at St. Petersburg in 1875, was a diplomatic document laying down broad general principles which have remained virtually unchanged until this day. The *Regulations*, which applied the principles of the Convention to details of international telegraphy, were drawn up by telegraph experts, and modified at periodic conferences.<sup>1</sup> International wireless was governed by a separate Convention.<sup>2</sup> As early as the Paris telegraph conference in 1925, proposals were made for combining telegraph and radio Conventions,<sup>3</sup> and in 1930 the International Bureau of the Telegraph Union (Berne, Switzerland) circulated a draft of a combined telegraph and radio Convention which was suggested for use as a basis for the submission of proposals by the various governments. The Spanish government invited the representatives of the telegraph and radio interests of the world to gather at Madrid in 1932 to create the first International Telecommunication Convention.

Although the general policies of international regulation of both telegraph and radio had been formulated at previous conferences, these policies were now to be subject to reconsideration in the framing of a new telecommunication Convention.

## Diplomats in the Saddle

Several issues of considerable political consequence were on the Madrid agenda. There was, for instance, the question of voting power, since it was felt by many governments that certain nations with colonial empires had enjoyed excessive voting strength at previous communications conferences. The delicate question of allocation of radio frequency bands also promised difficulties, since many European countries were dissatisfied with the number of radio channels they possessed, and there was a threat of a European raid upon channels previously allocated to the United States. National interests also was a paramount factor in proposals to change rates and code practices, since every nation desired such regulations as would assist the profitable development of its own communications system.

An especially bitter fight loomed over the question of how much direct control the various national governments would be permitted to exercise over communications by censorship and confiscation of messages and interruption of international radio and telephone communication. International practice had been based on an agreement adopted at the St. Petersburg conference in 1875 and left unchanged by all subsequent conferences. The censorship article read: "The high contracting parties reserve to themselves the right to stop the transmission of any private telegram which appears

## Mobilizing for Chaos

dangerous to the security of the state or which is contrary to the laws of the country, to public order, or to decency." Government interference with international communications will be discussed in a later chapter. It is sufficient for the present to state that government interference with communications has always been extensive and is growing steadily more severe. The recent record of nearly every country in the world, except Great Britain and the United States, is full of such incidents. The rising tide of nationalism on every continent has had the effect of enormously increasing the sensitivity of governments to criticism. The obvious intention of foreign offices in continental Europe, in South America, and in Japan and China, is to try to clamp down a rigid censorship which will control absolutely the news of domestic affairs directed to the outside world. By 1932, with the rise of strongly Fascistic and nationalistic governments in various countries, the social problem involved in communication control had become acute.

The proposals submitted by various governments to the Telegraph Union Bureau at Berne before the convening of the Madrid conference plainly showed the widespread desire to increase government control of international messages. The documents revealed with the greatest frankness that the chancelleries of a large number of great and little powers were resolved to maintain a de-

## Diplomats in the Saddle

liberate peacetime censorship over business and political news with the purpose of frustrating foreign correspondents.

The original preconference proposals as circulated to the various governments had included as Article 9 the old censorship article of the St. Petersburg Convention with this addition: ". . . provided that they immediately notify the office or station of origin of the stoppage of said communication, or any part thereof, except in cases where the issuance of this notice would appear dangerous to the security of the state." This addition was generally interpreted as a liberalization of the old censorship provision.

Counter proposals by various nations revealed the alarm created in foreign offices by this proposed interference with the censorship authority of governments. Japan, for instance, proposed the changing of the wording, ". . . of any private telegram which appears dangerous" to ". . . of any private telegram which might appear dangerous," and wanted to change ". . . or which is contrary to the laws of the country" to ". . . or which would be contrary to the laws of the country," with the words "might" and "would be" open to various interpretations. A Japanese amendment would also have removed the obligation to notify the sender that his message had been censored or destroyed.

Smaller nations, whose destinies are peculiarly

## Mobilizing for Chaos

subject to foreign pressures, showed the greatest zeal for censorship. The Czechoslovakian proposal, probably the most radical of all, would have tabooed all messages reflecting on the "good reputation" of the country as well as those held injurious to "economic interests." "Foreign correspondents," the Czechoslovakian proposal stated, "often send telegrams of which the text is not dangerous to the security of the state, but can be damaging to its good reputation. It is necessary to prohibit telegrams, the contents of which are for the purpose of damaging the economic situation of a country, a city, etc." Austria and China also backed a sweeping rule of censorship "for anything contrary to the economic interests of the State."<sup>4</sup>

The success of such proposals as these would have meant disaster to the press of all countries. The well-being of the press everywhere depends upon the free and speedy flow of news from all parts of the world. The necessity for speed under modern business and publishing conditions cannot be underestimated. Under such regulations as those proposed by Japan and Czechoslovakia, nations could rise and fall, governments could fall prey to economic disaster, and American readers would have to wait indefinitely to hear the news. Obviously, in countries where the news originated it would not be reported at all, since the censorship would snuff out all domestic freedom of transmis-

## Diplomats in the Saddle

sion. The application of these proposals would, moreover, increase the difficulties of the foreign correspondent to such an extent that he might have no usefulness whatsoever except as a mouthpiece for the foreign government. It is doubtful if he would be able to pierce the veil of secrecy, and even if he could, his chances of reporting the news would be excessively small. The threat of total suppression of his messages would hang over the correspondent's head like the sword of Damocles, and should he attempt to circumvent the censorship of the regular channels of communication he would probably find that the foreign government had decreed the end of his reportorial career in that country.

Anxiety over this apparently widespread movement to throttle international communication was confined chiefly to England and America. There are three major reasons why the great Anglo-Saxon powers look with apprehension upon the efforts of foreign chancelleries to control the flow of news. In the first place, Great Britain and the United States are both international bankers, with enormous investments abroad in the form of loans, commercial concessions, and foreign trade operations. The security of these investments would be jeopardized if information as to financial and political conditions were distorted or suppressed. Market operations in the world financial capitals, New

## Mobilizing for Chaos

York and London, are extremely sensitive to political and economic changes, and financial operations are dependent upon this sensitivity. The suppression or delay of information regarding internal conditions would, of course, be advantageous to smaller nations in allowing them greater liberty in financial manipulations. The censorship proposals were looked upon by many business leaders in America as direct attacks upon the commercial power of the United States. Many large banks, oil companies and similar organizations maintain staffs of experts in countries in which they are interested. If, for instance, it is reported that a foreign nation is to open bids for some contract, or that an important foreign bank is about to close its doors, a man hurries from Paris or Berlin to look into the matter. This kind of intelligence service, which many chancelleries might well envy, has been of great usefulness to America's foreign trade. Any proposal to censor information injurious to "economic interests" was a potential threat to American, and British, commercial power.

In the second place, the preëminence of American news-gathering agencies throughout the world is largely dependent upon the free flow of news. In spite of the constant effort of foreign governments to circumscribe the activities of American correspondents, American news agencies remain the standard for comprehensive, objective reporting



## Diplomats in the Saddle

with the minimum of "official" and "semiofficial" slanting. The comparatively high quality of their reporting has won them clients in all parts of the world, and the financial rewards of their policies have enabled them to build up the efficient, world-wide organizations which they now possess. If American correspondence were made as subservient to foreign interests as the correspondence of the "official" foreign agencies, the American agencies would lose one of their main selling points. The result would be a loss of clients, a drastic reduction in the number of bureaus and correspondents maintained in foreign countries, and a probable increase in cost of news services to the smaller number of newspapers in the market for American reports. The American news agencies therefore see a very definite loss in prestige and profit in prospect for them if foreign censorship proposals go into effect. The same apprehension is felt by individual American newspapers which maintain news bureaus abroad.

There is more behind foreign censorship proposals than the desire to permit only favorable reports to come out of the country. Foreign government-controlled news agencies are now aggressively battling American news agencies in the foreign field. The French service, Havas, for example, is fighting for dominance in South America, now one of the biggest markets of the United States.<sup>5</sup>

## Mobilizing for Chaos

It has been charged that foreign agencies competing with American agencies in the South American field have resorted to the practice of securing the retarding or deletion of independent press telegrams in order to get their own messages through first. It is known that the French government gives a subsidy to Havas so that it can undersell any competitor in French colonies, and in addition gives it telegraphic advantages over the governmental system which make it virtually impossible for other news agencies to gain a foothold in French possessions. France is unwilling to risk the objective standards of American agency news in her colonies. On the other hand, America is accused of a similar kind of cultural imperialism in Central and South America, since the charge has been made that certain American agencies are fighting foreign competition by selling news abroad at unprofitable rates and passing on the deficit to their clients in the United States. The censorship power, at any rate, enables nationalistically unscrupulous governments to discriminate against the American agencies, and thereby assist the penetration of their own news services into countries which are potential markets for textiles and automobiles as well as for news. The extension of foreign commercial power and political influence, and the corresponding loss of American power and influence, are involved in attacks upon American news agencies.



## Mobilizing for Chaos

vastly more to say about what people shall know and what newspapers shall print. Ardor for freedom of international intercourse, however, was a factor in the debates of the Madrid conference, whether that ardor was based upon the glorious idealism of the Anglo-Saxon tradition of civil liberty, or whether it was based upon the crasser motives of nationalism and economic self-interest.

Unfortunately, neither America nor England was swept by a wave of indignation because foreign governments threatened to strangle international intercourse. In the face of general public apathy, the press associations, a few of the larger newspapers and the newspaper trade journals attempted to excite a modest amount of public interest in the crisis of freedom. Among the press associations, the United Press and the International News Service showed more interest in the conference than the Associated Press, which is committed to greater coöperation with foreign agencies than its competitors because of its reciprocal news exchange agreements. The American Newspaper Publishers Association, the leading newspaper trade association in the United States, with a membership consisting mainly of publishers of daily newspapers, adopted a resolution framed by its committee on Radiotelegraph Communications to protect the rights of the press, but the resolution merely defined the telegraphic category

## Diplomats in the Saddle

known as "press message" and requested the high contracting parties to recognize the urgency, importance, and public interest of press messages and give them suitable priority over commercial messages. Nothing was said on the subject of censorship.

The leading American press associations and newspapers did, however, show considerable concern over the selection of personnel for the American delegation. When the names of members of the American delegation were announced, the press associations and newspapers sent strong protests to the State Department because no newspapermen were included. The newspaper argument was that the delegation included no one who was especially concerned with questions of censorship, priority of press messages or transmission costs, all of which harbored serious threats to the American press. Under Secretary of State William R. Castle, Jr., who selected the delegates subject to approval by President Hoover, replied that his choice had been based on the principle that the delegates should be technical men and representatives of the public at large rather than of special groups. The delegation, headed by Eugene O. Sykes, then acting chairman of the Federal Radio Commission, had been instructed, he said, to "fight to the limit any attempts to increase the censorship provisions of the convention to be adopted at Madrid beyond those in the Washington convention of 1929 [*sic*]."<sup>6</sup> It was

## Mobilizing for Chaos

hinted that the delegation would have been more satisfactory to the press except for two conditions—the Presidential campaign and congressional economy in limiting the expenses of delegates and technical advisers to six dollars a day. It was rumored that a number of experts approved by the American press were unable to accept the invitations to join the delegation because of the heavy expense they would have had to bear for accommodations and entertainment.

The State Department later yielded to newspaper pressure by appointing to the staff of technical advisers Robert T. Pell, press attaché of the American Embassy in Paris. Pell had represented American newspaper interests at several international journalistic parleys, and was generally and favorably known among American newspapermen as a vigorous defender of the ideals and practices of American journalism. Much of the hostility to the Castle selections died down after Pell joined the delegation at Madrid.

The conference itself was held in an atmosphere of international intrigue aggravated by the political and economic instability of Europe at the time. In addition to the official delegations, with their technical staffs, and families, Madrid was visited by a number of representatives of individual communication companies, including most of the American telegraph and wireless corporations, as

## Diplomats in the Saddle

well as by lobbyists seeking political or economic favors. The League of Nations showed considerable interest in the proceedings, but the telecommunication negotiations of the world are carried on independently of the League, and there was little evidence that the principles of internationalism of a society of nations had any effect upon the delegates at Madrid. The League of Nations did, however, make several proposals to the Madrid telecommunication conference which had been recommended by the League-sponsored Conference of Press Experts in 1927. It recommended that the principle of the "Press Rate" be extended in the form of "deferred press" rates for news telegrams, as a kind of international subsidy to newspapers. The League's Communications and Transit Section joined with the journalists in asking for the abolition of the censorship article in time of peace. The League also wanted priority granted to League messages sent out under Articles 15 and 16 of the Covenant so that in times of international crisis, such as the Manchurian trouble or the conflict between Paraguay and Bolivia in the Gran Chaco, there would be no delay in League compromise negotiations. In addition, the League wanted the raising of the ban of secrecy on messages which interfere with the "execution of international obligations." The League's Opium Advisory Committee, for instance, wished to have telegrams of nar-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

cotic smugglers made available to police authorities in various countries so that they might coöperate in breaking up the drug traffic.<sup>7</sup>

The actual results of the Madrid conference were disappointing to all who hoped for progress in safeguarding international communications.<sup>8</sup> Through the chairman of the delegation, Eugene O. Sykes, America made a blunt but futile proposal to abolish the censorship article in toto. Not only was this proposal killed, but all the energy of the American delegation was required to fight down various foreign proposals to increase the severity of the censorship provisions in the famous Article 26 of the Convention, which incorporated the censorship principle of the St. Petersburg Telegraph Convention.

In the concentration of the fight over Article 26, little publicity was given to the fact that freedom of international intercourse was in equal, or even greater, jeopardy from Articles 24, 27, and 31. Article 24, which deals with "Secrecy of Telecommunications," provides in the first paragraph that governments will take all measures possible to insure secrecy in international correspondence, but then proceeds, in paragraph two, to state that the governments "reserve the right to communicate international correspondence to the proper authorities, in order to insure either the application of their internal legislation, or the execution of inter-



## Diplomats in the Saddle

national conventions, to which the governments concerned are parties." The phrases "proper authorities" and "internal legislation" are extremely ambiguous. What might they mean, for example, to a correspondent who wishes to file telegrams on economic conditions which would be displeasing to foreign governments? Such telegrams might easily be construed as interfering with the application of "internal legislation."

The dictatorial rights which governments reserve for themselves appear even more clearly in the little-discussed Article 27. Here, under the title, "Suspension of Service," each government reserves the right "to suspend the service of international telecommunication for an indefinite time if it deems necessary, either generally or only as regards certain connections and/or certain classes of communications, provided that it immediately so advise each of the contracting governments, through the intermediary of the Bureau of the Union." In other words, an American or any other correspondent may find telecommunication service suddenly cut off as far as he is concerned if the foreign government "deems it necessary." Nothing is said in this article about notifying the sender. In the course of time, however, he may hear that service has been suspended, if his own government finally sends him such notice.

If a correspondent wishes to send an important

## Mobilizing for Chaos

message in secret language, he is by no means certain that his message will go through. Article 31, dealing with "Secret Language," permits secret language in the first paragraph, but states in the second paragraph that such secret telegrams may be sent between all countries, except those which previously, through the Bureau of the Union, have announced that they do not permit such language. The catch in this provision is that no specific period of time between "announcing" the prohibition of secret messages and the moment of application is stated. It might be one minute or six months. A correspondent who wishes to file a message in secret language may therefore suddenly discover that the authorities have "announced" that they are no longer accepting messages in this category.

Article 26 as finally passed was the old censorship article of the St. Petersburg Convention with the addition that governments "immediately notify the office of origin of the stoppage of the said communication or of any part thereof, except when it might appear dangerous to the safety of the state to issue such notice." The success of the American delegation in fighting off a concerted drive of foreign delegations to abolish the notification clause was hailed in America as a great victory for the free press and a sign of progress in international ethics. It was no such thing. According to Article 26 itself, notification could be dispensed with when

## Diplomats in the Saddle

it might appear "dangerous to the state." Moreover, if Article 26 is considered in conjunction with Article 27, which allows suspension of service whenever a government "deems necessary," it appears that the Madrid conference really took a step backwards. Various government officials who announced for the benefit of the American press that censorship had at last been abolished by international agreement either had not read Article 27 or were practicing deceit. The interruption of messages which has been practiced since the World War was simply given international legality by the Madrid convention.

The other attempts to liberalize the international regulations met with scant success. The recommendation of the American Newspaper Publishers Association that press messages be given priority was defeated.<sup>9</sup> The League proposal for a form of international subsidy of newspapers in the form of "deferred press" rates for news messages likewise failed. The League did, however, win two points. The conference adopted the League suggestion that priority be given messages sent out under Articles 15 and 16 of the League Covenant, and also raised the ban of secrecy on messages sent by dope merchants and others conducting business in violation of international agreements.

The storm of protest did not arise in the United States until some time after the signatures of more

## Mobilizing for Chaos

than seventy nations were affixed to the Convention on December 9 in the ornate Senate chamber at Madrid.<sup>10</sup> The encroachment of censorship was not the only attack upon American interests. Business men as well as newspapermen eventually awoke to the fact that the telegraph regulations had greatly increased the cost of international communication. For a number of years, government telegraph monopolies in continental Europe had tried to abolish the ten-letter code language (called Category A) in favor of the five-letter language (called Category B). Great Britain and the United States, the largest users of international telegraph, strongly opposed the abolition of Category A, since the five-letter code was much more expensive than the ten-letter in operation. The fight of the American delegates against the proposal was severely handicapped by the fact that the United States was not a signatory of the Telegraph Convention and had no intention of signing the Telegraph Regulations. Led by Italy, the smaller nations succeeded in having Category A abolished by a vote of 29 to 11. The result of this vote, which was unfavorable to the largest users of the telegraph, is one of the reasons for dissatisfaction with the voting system of the telecommunication conference.

In addition to this boost in cost of service, the conference fixed the rate on "urgent" press mes-

## Diplomats in the Saddle

sages at four times the old press rate. The significance of the changes authorized by the Madrid conference did not strike home until the new rates went into effect on January 1, 1934. Abolition of the low rate for "service messages" and for "cablese" (word combinations used by newspaper correspondents to reduce the number of words in messages), worked some hardships upon small news agencies and individual newspapers maintaining correspondents abroad. Although rates were eased in some categories, abolition of the "preferred" rate necessitated the use of the more expensive "urgent" rate for the speediest communication. Many business and financial houses which used the "urgent" service for market quotations and other financial information discovered that the cost of doing business put them at a great disadvantage with competitors. The attitude of the larger banks and brokerage houses has not yet been clearly revealed, but it is known that there are interlocking directorates of the cable companies with prominent banks, and it is believed by some newspapermen that the big financial companies using the cables are purposely refraining from opposition to the boost in rates because of profits they derive from their cable interests. The directorate of the Western Union Company, for example, includes directors of nineteen banks in and near New York, including the National City Bank, Chemical Bank

## Mobilizing for Chaos

and Trust, Bank of Manhattan, Federal Reserve Bank, Guaranty Trust Company, and Chase National Bank. Newspaper interests claim that the directors of these banks, interested in the solvency of Western Union, are undisturbed by the fact that rates to Japan were fixed at 22 cents a word "regular press" and 82 cents a word "urgent press," and that a 40-cent "ordinary urgent" rate has superseded a 25-cent preferred rate on the North Atlantic. On the other hand, a Cable and Radio Users' Protective Committee, representing more than fifty banking and business firms, was formed in January to fight the new rates. The committee was told by the American cable companies that the new rates were not governed by the Madrid Convention but were arranged as a regional agreement after permission for the increase had been obtained from foreign governments at the other end of the Atlantic cables. These facts were presented by cable users at the hearings on the proposal for a Federal Communications Commission as a strong argument for government regulation of telegraph cables, since the American public seems to be at the mercy of a cable monopoly subservient to foreign governments.<sup>11</sup>

A belief persists that the foreign monopolies forced the adoption of higher rates as an attack on American national interests. It is claimed that for a number of years the United States has paid about

## Diplomats in the Saddle

80 per cent of the cable traffic bill of the world. Many Americans are indignant because they are forced to accede to a group of foreign powers at a time when these same powers refuse to pay their debts to the United States. The cost of cable service to Americans will also be increased because of the depreciation of the dollar, since international accounting is computed on the basis of the gold franc. The net result of the new tolls, it is claimed, will be greater incomes for foreign companies, with American cable users paying the bill.

After considerable delay, the Madrid Convention was ratified by the United States Senate in June, 1934, five months after it went into effect. The Convention will, in all probability, be used as a further argument for the combining of American telecommunication systems under government auspices, since a united front would doubtless increase the bargaining power of the United States in future international parleys. With the probable crystallization of a national communications policy under the new Federal Communications Commission, it is likely that the United States will be ready to battle vigorously for its national interests when the next telecommunication conference is held at Cairo, Egypt, in 1937.

The Cairo conference, indeed, promises a more bitter conflict over national interests than any that

## Mobilizing for Chaos

has so far been held. Voting remains a source of bitter rivalry, with the nations lined up against each other on the question of whether or not colonial governments should be allowed to vote. At Madrid an attempt was made to effect a compromise, but the conference finally gave up in disgust and turned the question over to diplomatic agencies, adopting a provisional voting system which reduced the total colonial vote of any country to one in addition to the vote of the central government. A more acrid fight looms over the question of allocation of radio broadcasting frequencies. Upon signing the Madrid Convention, Soviet Russia formally reserved the right to use a dozen radio channels not provided for her in the radio regulations. China, Hungary, Japan, Poland, and Rumania retaliated by making reservations to the effect that they did not bind themselves, as far as Russia was concerned, to those sections of the General Radio Regulations which prohibited the use of radio frequencies which might cause international interference. Japan gave itself a free hand by simply declaring that it reserved the right to "take any steps which might become necessary with a view to protecting its radio communications against any interference which might be caused by the putting into execution of the said reservations of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."<sup>12</sup>



## Diplomats in the Saddle

Political changes since the Madrid conference have had the effect of intensifying national rivalries in the communication field. The Hitler revolution in Germany and the suppression of the Socialists in Austria have been severe blows to freedom of intercourse in Europe. The aggressive nationalism of the new Germany, with its military ambitions and its phenomenal development of propaganda-politic, has rubbed the raw sores of European nationalism and set every country to work building up its communications armaments for national defense and propaganda. The bellicosity of Japan in the Far East, with the blunt announcement of a kind of Monroe Doctrine for continental Asia, means that Japan will try to secure a stranglehold on communications in the East. Whichever way one turns, there is the same evidence of a passionate nationalistic urge to get as much as possible and give nothing. It is in this atmosphere that the next telecommunication conference will meet. Perhaps one should not complain that the Madrid conference was barren of any sense of international coöperation and responsibility. The delegates gathered in the great chamber of the Senate of Spain were at least able to reach a compromise on technical questions that are fundamental in international communication. The political exploitation of the physical equipment had not at that time reached a point where the wisdom of

## Mobilizing for Chaos

technical experts was totally discarded for the political strategy of nationalist diplomats. Whether a rudimentary international coöperation can be maintained in the future is difficult to foresee.

The prospects are not hopeful. A fanatical nationalism in any country might wreck at any time the delicate fabric of international collaboration. A new alignment of nations for political and military coöperation might likewise dam the channels of international intercourse. Even in the United States, where technological progress has been largely unaffected by political fanaticism, there is growing up a mood of recrimination against nations that are believed to have traduced America in financial deals as well as in the political strategy of communications control. If the sense of international responsibility dies in America, if American journalism loses its zeal for the protection of free intercourse throughout the world, then the future of international communication is indeed dark.

## Radio Armaments

THE strategy of nationalism requires concentration of power for domestic purposes as well as for competition with rival nations in the international field. Nationalism in communication faces two ways. In the foreign field it seeks to advance the national interests to the disadvantage of the interests of other nations, and its basic motives are national defense, national prestige, and the extension of national influence for political and commercial ends. In the domestic field, nationalism seeks a stranglehold on all internal facilities of communication for the ultimate purpose of controlling and regimenting public opinion to build up mass acquiescence in the policies and ambitions of the political state.

The principal means of internal communication in any country are the transportation systems, including railroads and motor lines, the postal system, telegraph, telephone, and radio broadcasting. In virtually every important country in the world, with the exception of the United States, these services are either state monopolies or private monopolies rigidly controlled by national governments. Government control of the first four of the means

## Mobilizing for Chaos

of communication listed above is obvious and of long standing. The excuse given for government operation, at least in the European state system, has been military necessity because of the constant danger of war and the requirements of rapid mobilization. It should not be forgotten, however, that governmental control of these public utilities has also resulted in forging cultural and commercial unity and bending populations under the yoke of national authority. So long as national governments remain democratic and representative, this condition might be interpreted as a blessing, but recent political tendencies resulting from the resurgence of nationalism are bringing about, through the control of communication, the spread of government propaganda and the destruction of minorities and minority opinion.

Even in the United States, the last stronghold of private initiative in communication enterprises, the postal system is a government monopoly, and use of the mails is subject to strict regulation in respect to "seditious" or "indecent" matter. Railroads, telegraph, and telephone have been regulated to a certain degree by the Interstate Commerce Commission, and radio broadcasting has been regulated and licensed by the Federal Radio Commission. All forms of electrical communication will be regulated by the new Federal Communications Commission. The strongly urged pro-

## Radio Armaments

posals to bring the railroads under government ownership or control, and to merge the communications systems of the country under government supervision, indicate a marked tendency in the direction of the European system.

The most important single factor in domestic political and social control in communication in modern times is radio broadcasting. No other modern invention has opened up such limitless possibilities for influencing public morale. For good or for evil, radio broadcasting will become increasingly important as a means of social control until some other and better invention supersedes it. The mechanical perfection of radio broadcasting may not itself have stimulated the acceleration of the welding of mass populations into self-conscious and militant "nations," but at least it can be said that modern nationalism has perceived and appropriated this potent instrument of mass control.

The World War came too soon to permit a demonstration of what radio can do in a general war. Time was broadcast for the Allies from the Eiffel Tower station, and meteorological data were sent out at intervals by various field transmitters.<sup>1</sup> In the last months of the War the Germans attempted propaganda by radio broadcast. Station POZ at Nauen sent out daily bulletins in German, French, and English, giving highly colored reports of German successes and minimizing their losses, but this

## Mobilizing for Chaos

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## Mobilizing for Chaos

information was received by a mere handful of radio operators and was of negligible value. The War did, however, stimulate experimentation in radio telephony, which up to that time had been more or less of a scientific amusement for amateurs. The British government, and later the American government, encouraged experimental work at the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company plant at East Pittsburgh, and it was there on November 2, 1920, that KDKA began the first regular broadcasting to the public with the transmission of the results of the Harding election.<sup>2</sup>

From this modest beginning, comprising KDKA, a few amateur broadcasting sets, and a few hundred listeners equipped with amateur receivers, radio broadcasting has grown, within fifteen years, to a mammoth enterprise claiming probably more than 1,200 regularly operated broadcasting stations in various parts of the world serving in the neighborhood of 40,000,000 receiving sets.<sup>3</sup> The total world listening public probably amounts to three to eight times the number of receiving sets, or from 120,000,000 to 320,000,000 persons. Part of the magic which is associated with the word "radio" arises from the phenomenal speed of its development and the extraordinary size of the public which is affected by it. The miracle of radio has been described in thousands upon thousands of books and articles, and glorified in thousands upon



## Radio Armaments

thousands of speeches, but no amount of repetition and triteness will destroy the awesomeness of radio's proportions.

The attitude of governments toward the radio prodigy has varied greatly. In some countries, this device for the apparently uncontrolled dissemination of information and propaganda over the free air has been looked upon with suspicion, and nations have gone so far as to ban receiving as well as broadcasting. In other countries, such as the United States, the government has adopted an attitude of sympathy and coöperation so that the entire nation may enjoy the benefits which radio has to offer to commerce and culture. All governments, whether liberal or autocratic, have recognized the importance of radio as a means of controlling the public mind, and have assumed as much power over broadcasting as the political atmosphere allows. In this decade, and in most countries, this power is unrestricted.

In nearly every country, radio broadcasting is looked upon as a public utility, and this is especially true in countries where government ownership of communication services had previously been the rule. Common to all countries are radio laws which usually provide that the broadcaster of seditious or indecent matter shall be subject to penalties for violating the radio laws as well as any other laws providing penalties for the same of-

## · Mobilizing for Chaos

fense. Moreover, radio stations in virtually every country are subject to laws which provide for the appropriation and control of communications systems in the event of national crises. In some countries the authorities may legally expropriate even though the occasion is not necessarily one of particular national importance. The private owner of a station might be deprived of his license and property in the event of a local strike or riot, for example, without compensation or the right to reclaim the property even after the restoration of normal conditions. In countries where military training and national defense are emphasized, extreme penalties are provided for failure to register radio receiving sets and obtain licenses, on the theory that national control of communication is essential in case of war, and that it is necessary to obtain information as to the location of all radio receiving sets available for use by enemy interests. Some countries, such as Germany and Yugoslavia, refuse to allow foreigners of certain nationalities to possess receiving sets. Regardless of moral and ethical considerations, the decision of the authorities as to what is to the best interests of the country is always the ruling factor in radio control.

The form of government control of broadcasting in foreign countries exhibits great superficial variation. In some countries, such as Germany and Russia, there is outright government ownership and

## Radio Armaments

operation. Italy has a private corporate monopoly under government regulation. New Zealand has government high-power, and independent low-power, broadcasting. In all foreign countries, regardless of the financial set-up, government participation is active.

A brief summary follows of conditions of radio broadcasting in some of the leading foreign states:

France: The government chain of stations, including the powerful Eiffel Tower station (40,000 watts), is the foundation of the French broadcasting system. There is no monopoly, but most of the stations are owned by the government, and rigid control is exercised over other stations. Broadcasting is permitted to French citizens only. There are 31 stations well distributed over France, broadcasting on short waves. Receiving-set owners, numbering probably between 2,000,000 and 2,500,000, are assessed 10 francs annually, the receipt serving as a license.

Germany: Radio broadcasting is under the direct control of the government, which owns the equipment of all stations. German radio represents one of the most efficient "single coverage" systems in the world. Relay stations are being discontinued, and main stations are being replaced with others of higher power. Among the 31 stations are two having 60,000 watts power each (Heilsburg and Stuttgart), and two others having 35,000 and 30,000

## Mobilizing for Chaos

watts power respectively (the Zeesen stations at Berlin). Receiving licenses are granted to everyone except Russians, Poles, and Slovaks at the rate of 24 marks a year. Germany is provided with a remarkably large number of receiving sets, especially since the installation of cheap receiving sets for propaganda purposes has become a government policy. The number of receiving sets in Germany is estimated at about 5,000,000.

England: Radio is a monopoly of the British Broadcasting Corporation, a division of the post office department. England, like Germany, has begun a program of reorganization which will reduce twenty original stations to five powerful regional stations which will serve the whole island of Great Britain, each broadcasting two programs on separate wave-lengths. England has the powerful London and Manchester stations of 50,000 watts each, and two Daventry stations having power of 30,000 and 25,000 watts respectively. The number of receiving sets is between 4,500,000 and 5,500,000. Receiving licenses cost 10 shillings a year.

Soviet Russia: Radio in Russia is, of course, government owned and operated. Information about Russian broadcasting is incomplete and unreliable, but it is believed that there are approximately 80 stations in operation, including one at Leningrad and two at Moscow said to operate on power in excess of 100,000 watts. Russian esti-

## Radio Armaments

mates place the number of receiving sets between 500,000 and 1,500,000, but the government encourages the placing of loud speakers in public places as well as the purchase of receiving sets, so that the total number of listeners is probably several million. Receiving sets are licensed.

A world view of radio shows the various nations busily engaged in building up more and more powerful broadcasting equipment and reorganizing broadcasting systems so as to insure centralized and thorough national coverage. At the same time the nations are generally engaged in encouraging reception by reducing prices of receiving equipment. With the exception of the Papal station at Vatican City and the League of Nations station at Geneva, there are no stations in the world (if the United States and Canada be excepted) which are not official or semiofficial. The use that is being made of these broadcasting armaments by governments for "educational" and propaganda purposes will be described later, but it should be observed here that as far as physical equipment is concerned governments are steadily enlarging, entrenching, and consolidating their radio broadcasting power as a regular part of governmental political strategy.

The corruption of the miraculous radio for nationalistic ends is a superb subject of contempla-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

tion for an ironic philosopher. Not longer ago than 1928, General Harbord said that "the radio industry in America has played a major rôle, not only in the development of a national consciousness in our own people, but also in the cosmopolitan consciousness of the world at large. More than all the peace conferences of history, it has served to make the concept of 'Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men' a reality, and, taking the world by the hand, has led it one big step farther down that shadowy trail that ends in Utopia."<sup>4</sup>

The trail is shadowy indeed, and the direction is certainly downward. Instead of bringing Utopian cosmopolitanism, it is much more likely that radio will accentuate narrow nationalistic differences. There is, unfortunately, no statistical data on the amount of nationalistic propaganda which is broadcast from the stations of the world, but sufficient is known of general conditions to warrant the assertion that the underlying motive of most radio broadcasting is the inculcation of national patriotism. Radio stations outside of the United States give the bulk of their time to "educational" programs, chiefly music, and to "news." The "educational" programs are designed primarily to awaken a sense of cultural unity and patriotism by common appreciation and pride for the achievements of national artists and performers. The "news" is infor-

## Radio Armaments

mation and misinformation tinged with the coloring of nationalism.

The extreme form of mass education by radio can be seen in dictator states of Europe, Communist Russia and Fascist Italy and Germany. These states are "advanced" as far as broadcasting is concerned, if present tendencies continue. Soviet propagandists have paid eloquent tribute to the effectiveness of the microphone in indoctrinating with Communism the various racial and linguistic groups which make up the Union of Soviet Republics. Radio was the ideal vehicle for influencing a vast, widely spread population just awakening from illiteracy and political lethargy. One didn't have to be able to read to fall under the spell of the political and social theories of the Commissariat of Education. There was no sophistication of culture in Russia such as compels Americans to report that Russian propaganda broadcasts are inordinately dull. The radio loud speaker in the workers' club room, the factory, or the army barracks, with the eager listeners grouped about it, was the ideal expression of collectivist recreation. The Soviet Union already possesses some of the highest powered broadcasting stations in the world, and it may be counted on, for domestic political reasons, to keep abreast of all technical developments. The Soviet state, with its concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and its program of lit-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

erally making over the mentality of the mass of Russian people, requires just such a mechanical aid as radio. It may be useless to speculate what the development of Soviet Russia might have been without radio, but it seems probable that indoctrination would not have proceeded nearly so speedily without the microphone and the loud speaker.

German radio has been no less efficacious than the Russian in indoctrinating the population with nationalistic dogma. The use of radio for nationalistic purposes was not an innovation of Hitler's. For years before Hitler's rise to the Chancellorship, a series of political control committees (*Kontrollausschüsse*) supervised the programs of the various sending stations.<sup>5</sup> One member of each committee was appointed by the federal government, the rest by the state in which the sender was located. Each station had to obtain the approval of its respective committee before broadcasting any "political" news. The result was that the broadcasting of any criticism of, or attack on, the government became impossible.

Before the Hitler revolution German radio programs consisted largely of music and lectures on educational topics. The musical programs consisted chiefly of national military marches, patriotic songs, nationalistic folk-songs, with some classical music mainly by German composers. The daily program of the great "German Wave" (*Deutsche*



## Radio Armaments

*Welle*) station at Königswusterhausen, which reaches all parts of Germany, regularly closed with the playing of "Deutschland über Alles." The "educational" lectures on art, literature, and science were devoted mainly to the glorification of German achievements. On such occasions as the launching of a new German "pocket battleship," or the launching of the *Bremen*, or the first trip of the *Graf Zeppelin* to America, the radio lecturers indulged in chauvinistic eulogies to the superiority of German science, German enterprise, and Germanism in general. Juvenile programs have been used to inform the children of Germany that the eagle is a German bird, the fox a German animal, and the oak tree a German tree.

Until Hitler, German radio avoided extreme political partisanship in news and lectures broadcast. The government policy in general was to try to weaken internal political dissension by barring political speeches, and to try to increase national unity and further a common national psychology by appeals to patriotism. Speeches by government officials, such as the president and chancellor, however, were broadcast frequently on nation-wide hook-ups. Moreover, the organizers and performers of radio programs came mainly from the middle and upper classes, and the programs naturally reflected the prejudices of these classes. The result was a good deal of criticism of radio by the politi-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

cal parties. The Communists were totally denied the use of the air, the Socialists had only slight concessions, and the extreme nationalists of the Right were constantly clamoring for the use of radio for radical nationalistic political propaganda.

With Hitler's victory, radio went to work for government more intensively than in Russia. One of the first acts of the new government was to organize, early in March, 1933, a Ministry of Propaganda and Popular Enlightenment for the purpose of coördinating the propaganda efforts of the National Socialist Party, which was synonymous with the German government. The new Ministry was given to the thirty-five-year-old Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, who, as editor of the Nazi newspaper in Berlin, *Der Angriff*, had already achieved fame as the organizer of the propaganda which swept the National Socialists into power. Goebbels not only enjoyed Cabinet rank, but stood near the top of the Nazi hierarchy in terms of power within the party. He promptly organized his ministry into five departments with nation-wide dictatorial power over (1) Propaganda; (2) Radio; (3) Press; (4) Cinema; (5) Theater. Under orders from Goebbels, all propaganda channels, including the German broadcasting network, were immediately taken over by the Ministry and coördinated with the experienced propaganda department of the National Socialist Party.

## Radio Armaments

The result in radio has been a rapid multiplication of both microphones and loud speakers in Germany. "I am a sworn enemy," Dr. Goebbels declared, "of every sort of boredom."<sup>8</sup> In conformity with his program to provide a variety of "events" with propaganda value, the propaganda ministry has sponsored a continuous round of meetings, jamborees, conventions, memorial celebrations, regattas, picnics, and other occasions for public speaking. Few convocations are held in Germany without the installation of microphones transmitting from some broadcasting station. The German government encourages the gathering together of families, club members, workmen, and other groups around loud speakers whenever a political program is broadcast. The program changes brought about by the Nazi Revolution have made the cultural events, such as songs and instrumental music, still more nationalistic than they were under previous *régimes*, while a great deal more time has been given to attempts to regiment the minds of all Germans directly through lectures and addresses preaching National Socialist dogma. The Hitler *régime* has made regular use of national hook-ups for big political speeches, such as those delivered by the Chancellor on the Day of Potsdam and during the brief meetings of the Reichstag. On several occasions the national hook-up has been used to stimulate the nation to direct action. On the eve of

## Mobilizing for Chaos

the church election in July, 1933, in which some 20,000,000 German Protestants were to vote whether or not they would merge in a single, Nazi-dominated Evangelical church, Chancellor Hitler, who is himself nominally a Catholic, stepped to the microphone and told the Protestants how to vote.<sup>7</sup> A more spectacular use of radio to manipulate the population of an entire nation occurred on November 10, 1933, two days before the "Peace and Honor" election in which Germans were asked to indorse Hitler's foreign policy. As a special appeal to labor, the event was staged in the dynamo hall of the great Siemens electrical plant in Berlin. At one o'clock on November 10, the Siemens sirens shrieked into the microphones and movement all over Germany stopped for one minute. Loud speakers in every factory, store, workshop, hotel, restaurant, schoolroom, and on many public squares throughout Germany were connected with the microphones before the Nazi chiefs, and between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 Germans probably heard the speeches. With machinery grinding in the adjoining halls, Dr. Goebbels made an introductory statement. Then Hitler, in a gray jacket, and surrounded by workmen in blue overalls, stood on a dynamo and spoke into a microphone for forty-five minutes. Two days later about 40,500,000 Germans voted for Hitler and his program—

## Radio Armaments

very nearly the total voting strength of the Third Reich.<sup>8</sup>

The radio hook-up is being used more and more frequently by the governments of non-Fascist states. Gaston Doumergue used it in an attempt to pacify troubled France when he took over the premiership after the Stavisky scandal and the Paris riots. President Roosevelt has used it on several occasions, notably to reassure and quiet the country during the banking crisis immediately after his inauguration. The power of national leaders to sway populations by use of the radio is no mere theory of radio visionaries, but has been proved by actual demonstration. When, for example, J. M. Keynes gave a radio talk to British listeners in 1931, which was construed by some people as advice to spend and not to save, the sale of National Savings Certificates fell off from 250,000 to 170,000 a day. It was necessary to call Sir Josiah Stamp to the microphone to point out that investment in such certificates was one of the few methods of saving which would not create unemployment. Three days later the sales of certificates went up to 450,000, and then to the record figure of 500,000.<sup>9</sup>

Unfortunately for the peace of the world, the broadcasting of propaganda is not confined within national borders. It is one of the peculiarities of

## Mobilizing for Chaos

radio communication that it can be received as far as the electrical impulses will carry, regardless of political frontiers. As a matter of fact, governments have shown no inclination to try to organize their broadcasting facilities for domestic purposes alone. A person would have to be very naïve indeed not to ask why the various governments of Europe have encouraged the construction of broadcasting stations having from 30,000 to 100,000 watts power—many times more powerful than would be necessary for domestic use. Moreover, nearly every government in the world is now sponsoring the construction of powerful short-wave stations whose peculiar usefulness lies in their ability to broadcast over great distances.

In reality, the nations are engaged in a continuous war of propaganda over the air. Not long ago a state of virtual chaos existed in European radio, with the various nations trying to drown each other out. International agreements have at least made the propaganda war more systematic and orderly, except for occasional lapses into the old free-for-all caterwauling of the early nineteen-twenties. Soviet Russia has for years been the butt of bitter recriminations for broadcasting radio programs in German, English, Polish, and other foreign languages from the powerful Moscow stations. Finland, Esthonia, Poland, Germany, and a number of other northern European nations have been

## Radio Armaments

especially alarmed by the Russian broadcasts, calling them dangerous to their existence as national states. Several storms have broken out in the British Parliament over propaganda in English broadcast from Moscow stations. Several years ago Poland built what Poles call "the most powerful radio station in the world" to "jam" Russian broadcasts. German high-power stations have been used for the same purpose. Russia, it should be said, maintains its innocence, claiming that the foreign language broadcasts are intended for national minorities resident in Russia. That these broadcasts should be of interest both within and without Russia speaks for the flexibility of radio as a propaganda instrument.

Russia is not the only offender. Four rival radio stations run full blast within forty miles of each other along the boundary of Silesia. The Habicht broadcasts to Austria from the Nazi station in Munich were a continuous provocation of international friction. When Germany set up the Müh-lacker station on the Alsace border, France countered with the powerful Strasbourg transmitter. "Jamming" a foreign broadcast by "accidentally" slipping away from the wave-band frequency assigned by international agreement is not uncommon. The opening of some country's newest station is frequently a signal for stations in rival countries to go off their wave-bands and interfere. The

## Mobilizing for Chaos

Pope's first broadcast from the Vatican City station was made unintelligible by the interference of a dozen nations.<sup>10</sup> Poland and Germany have both tried experimental broadcasts to the United States and Canada over short-wave channels. Dr. Goebbels envisages a daily short-wave broadcast in English and German for North American audiences. He proposes to begin with musical programs and proceed to "educational" topics after sufficiently large audiences have been built up.<sup>11</sup> Even North America is not free from the irritation of propaganda from stations in neighboring countries. The agitation of the Canadian Radio League to nationalize radio broadcasting in Canada is partly the result of the patriotic fear that Canada will be submerged by the high-powered air propaganda of the American broadcasters. The chairman of the League, Graham Spry, complains that powerful United States broadcast groups are actively propagandizing against the public ownership movement in Canada, and attempting to force the American system on Canadians by means of an onslaught on public opinion through broadcasting channels.<sup>12</sup>

Radio news services are now sponsored by most of the great powers as propaganda carriers. The British Official Wireless broadcasts news glorifying the British, Transocean Radio glorifies the German cause, and the French government keeps the Indo-Pacific and other regional agencies provided



## Radio Armaments

with information complimentary to the French. The construction of powerful new short-wave stations will spur the use of radio news agencies to furnish cheap, official propaganda disguised as news to local news distributors or directly to newspapers equipped with receiving sets.

"Jamming" is not the only protective device utilized to nullify the effects of propaganda broadcasts from rival nations. Germany's effort to insulate its population against foreign influences has taken the form of popularizing, under government auspices, cheap and weak receiving sets with a capacity which will enable them to receive only nearby German stations. The idea has not yet made much headway in other European states, but it may be expected to do so. There is a subject for the world's thoughtful contemplation in the spectacle of Germany struggling to outdo all other nations in the power of its sending facilities while simultaneously struggling to reduce the power of its receiving equipment to the minimum of audibility. Nothing epitomizes more aptly the absurdities of the nationalistic psychology.

International broadcasts, hailed as harbingers of a millennium in international understanding, have dismally failed to achieve any *rapprochement* among nations. Each nation exhibits extreme nationalism and extreme jealousy in the conviction that its own programs are superior to those of other

## Mobilizing for Chaos

countries. Each claims to have the greatest radio artists. The average radio listener is therefore not easily persuaded that foreign programs are worth hearing. Again, the language difficulty is insurmountable for the average listener. He may listen to a foreign broadcast once or twice and enjoy the novelty, but when his curiosity is satisfied he will turn with pleasure and relief to the broadcasts of his own national stations in his own language. The attitude of governments has generally been unfavorable to international broadcasts. For domestic political reasons, governments are inclined to look upon international broadcasts, either direct or relayed, with suspicion and fear. When President Zamora of Spain made his first broadcast to the United States, and the address was relayed to Argentine by a Buenos Aires newspaper, the newspaper was suppressed by the government and international broadcasts were banned.

Such is the fate of the latest scientific boon to mankind. Radio is the tool of government. It has provided nationalistic governments with exactly the kind of direct approach to human intelligence which is most effective in bending populations to national cohesion and cultural unity. Through broadcasting channels propaganda speeds directly from the political fountainhead to the listener's ear without the intermediation of any interpreter or critic, and is not subject to the steadying influ-

## Radio Armaments

ences of correction or reply. Radio propaganda possesses unprecedented force because it utilizes the persuasiveness of the human voice and the personal prestige of the speakers from whom it issues. It is irresponsible in the sense that it is not subject to the reconsideration and after-study which occur when ideas are published in cold print.

From an international point of view, the seizure and exploitation of radio to fortify the patchwork of nationalism has created a modern Babel. International broadcasting is perceived as a weapon of propaganda, and betrays an absence of international consciousness. The irony of broadcasting finds expression in the legend borne on the coat of arms of the British Broadcasting Company. "Nation," the legend hopefully affirms, "shall speak Peace unto Nation."

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

THE vital part of intelligence about the world from the standpoint of the immediate creation of ideas and opinions flows over the cable, telegraph, and radio channels in a form commonly referred to as "news." News is not the sole determinant of the average man's impressions of world affairs. Opinions are based upon environment and training, as well as upon personal experiences and slower forms of communication such as correspondence, magazines, and books. Nevertheless, the usual and most vivid day-by-day source of the average man's ideas concerning the world he lives in is the budget of information and misinformation which comes over modern high-speed electrical transmission devices. Modern man's curiosity concerning events outside of his own immediate circle and community is satisfied by a day-by-day diet of news, and the character of an average man's views on political questions will be affected by his news diet in the same way that the condition of his physical body is affected by the kind of foodstuffs he eats. The analogy is inadequate in this sense, that a man who malnourishes his body on a diet exclusively of

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

whiskey or sugar is injuring chiefly himself, while a man who lives on an unbalanced diet of news is not only injuring himself but is a source of danger to everyone with whom he comes into contact. Current ideas, the potent medley of individual impressions which go to make up the abstraction, "public opinion," are derived from the news which John Smith, Jean Durand or Hans Schmidt reads in the morning newspaper or hears over the radio.

The dependence of news, under modern competitive conditions, upon highspeed electrical equipment has already been pointed out. If there is a conflict between "new" news and "old" news, "new" news always has a supreme advantage. The most vivid impression is the most recent impression, and immediateness is itself a recommendation of the importance of the information. This fact helps to explain the close connection between news and the physical equipment which is used to distribute it. The bulk of the most effective news, the news which gives the average man his most vivid awareness of the march of events, is totally dependent upon the networks of national communication systems which web the globe.

The key to the politics of communications systems, as has been pointed out in previous sections, is the passion of nationalism. Nationalism is likewise the key to the problem of international news. The ambitious cupidity of the national state, the

## Mobilizing for Chaos

fierce will-to-power which characterizes the resurgence of nationalism in this decade, could scarcely be expected to stop short with the subjugation of the physical equipment of communication. The control of the physical equipment is a means to an end. The end is tripartite: First, national defense in war or other crises; second, extension of national trade; third, extension of national culture. News is the essential factor in obtaining the last two objectives, and of great importance in the first.

The inquiry into nationalism and propaganda proceeds, therefore, from the physical equipment of communications to the matter which is transmitted. Around the core of copper wire and radio impulses has grown up a vast and complicated machinery for the dissemination of intelligence. The ramifications of the organizations engaged in the news business are much more complex than the network of physical equipment of communications. The agencies which utilize the electrical communication systems are many times more numerous than the telegraph and radio companies that serve them. Moreover, the various pressures and influences brought to bear upon news and news-gatherers by government, business, and the public are vastly more complicated and subtle than those which affect telecommunications.

If one is impressed by the phenomenal growth of cables and telegraph lines and radio circuits in re-

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

cent years, he should be even more struck by the rapid increase in the amount of news which is made available to modern readers, as well as by the multiplication of the number of persons engaged in providing this news. The increased interest in international affairs stimulated by the World War and post-War problems, and the extension of lines of electrical communication to the most inaccessible places in the world, have enormously increased the amount of international news which is transmitted over the world's nervous system. The commercial tendencies which have favored the consolidation and increased capitalization of newspapers permitted these newspapers to increase greatly the volume of foreign news in their columns, and gave some of them sufficient resources to establish their own correspondents in foreign lands. The development of huge "newsminded" publics, both for newspapers and radio, the growth of strong newspapers of enormous circulation, the rapid extension of news coverage by the news-gathering associations, and the perfection of rapid and accurate techniques for the gathering and distribution of information, have all contributed to the perfection of a news coverage system which might seem, superficially, of great social usefulness.

The corruption of the stream of world news by the force of nationalism is one of the most disturbing facts of our time. The contrast between the

## Mobilizing for Chaos

facilities for international news reporting and the use to which they are actually put is as glaring as the contrast between the web of international communication systems and the practical exigencies of communication politics. Never has the world stood in greater need of a body of dependable news as a basis for opinion and policy-making. The extension of literacy, the multiplication of international contacts through trade, intellectual coöperation, and travel, and the growing consolidation and professionalization of national life, have all helped to create a need for a supranationalistic machinery of record divorced from the blighting influences of patriotism and politics. The ideal exists. However distant it may be from the actualities of news practices in modern times, it still serves the useful function of reminding us how grossly the stream of world information has been muddled by rampant nationalism.

The exploitation of news for special interests is not in itself a new phenomenon. Nations have always recognized the importance of controlling information and shaping it to their special ends. As far back as history goes there is evidence that tribes and nations deliberately distorted "news" for purposes of defense and conquest.<sup>1</sup> Propaganda was a conspicuous factor in the Crusades, in the Napoleonic Wars, in the Franco-Prussian War, and in the Spanish American War. *Kulturpolitik*, the ex-



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

tension of national power through cultural propaganda, was skilfully exploited by pre-War Germany and Japan. The World War, however, marked a turning point in the development of a perception of the supreme usefulness of news control. In this War the fact became generally apparent that a peculiarity of the modern world is its capacity for mass action, and those persons who wished to direct the masses became acutely aware of the propaganda resources which had been placed in their hands by human intelligence in the form of mechanical inventions, psychological knowledge, and organization. The story of the wartime manipulation of the masses by propaganda has been told elsewhere;<sup>2</sup> the important fact for modern times is that the skilful propaganda methods of wartime have been made a part of the regular peacetime policy of nations. In other words, war in the sense of armed conflict and bursting shells and poison gases, has become only incidental to the enduring effort to regiment the public mind and to use it to augment national power in the community of nations.

Concrete signs of the increasing determination of nations to control news and opinion are numerous. The foremost sign is the spread of dictator schemes of government with their complete acceptance of the ultra-nationalistic doctrine that only that should be allowed to exist which furthers the

## Mobilizing for Chaos

national destiny. In countries such as Germany, Italy, and Russia, only the government speaks, press and radio are government sounding boards, and newsmen are civil servants employed to interpret news with the officially authorized slant. In all countries, the semiofficial status of those who deal in information is becoming more and more generally recognized. The difference between the "old" and the "new" diplomacy is not one of ends, but of method. The "old" diplomacy, conducting its intrigues in secret and disdaining to report to a public which it held in contempt, has given way to a diplomacy which indoctrinates the public with propaganda and thereby gives the public the illusion that it is collaborating with the government in a noble expression of the spirit of democracy. The new order of the day is not "thou shalt not," but "thou shalt!" Governments now give the most solicitous care to their press contacts. The new professionalism which produced the public relations counsel in the business world has produced the press expert in government. Since the World War the number of departmental press bureaus, official points of contact between the government and the press, has increased enormously. No modern diplomatic mission is complete without its "press experts" through whom the news of the negotiations is funneled.

The more serious danger is not the coloration of

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

the news-stream by these frankly avowed propagandists for governmental policy, but rather the control by nationalistic forces of the so-called "independent" newsman, the objective reporter of the "true" truth, who, as it is believed, represents the public and reports to it on events of public importance. According to the traditional view, this man is the servant of the people, and therefore enjoys a quasi-public position and a certain immunity from the coercions which beset the common man. According to this view, the newsman is unbiased, above the petty bickerings of political creed, and devoted to an abstract principle of objective, scientific fact-reporting for the public weal. In order to understand the failure of the newsman to live up to the ideal, with the betrayal of the world public to the forces of nationalism, it is necessary to describe the methods by which world news is gathered as well as the conditions which the news gatherer confronts.

The bulk of world news, the major portion of the news diet consumed by John Smiths the world over at the breakfast table, is supplied by the great press associations. These associations possess far-flung organizations of skilled reporters and utilize the latest and most efficient mechanical equipment for the transmission of their reports. They are commonly divided into three classes, official, semioffi-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

cial, and independent, according to the amount of government collaboration in their reports, but in reality all press associations have a strongly national character with the possible exception of certain small organizations such as the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, which represents racial interests. The press associations differ in the amount of direct government control affecting them, but all are obviously governed by the newspapers they serve, and the destinies of all of them are inseparably united with the destinies of the nations with which they are identified. An impartial international news gathering organization does not exist.

Most transparently the creatures of the governments which control them are the press associations in dictatorships such as Germany, Italy, Russia, Rumania, and a dozen smaller nations. Russia has always had a press association monopoly, and whether the agency is the reactionary pre-War Viestnik or the revolutionary post-War Tass, the central Russian government continues to have absolute control over incoming and outgoing news reports of the unique agency. In Italy, the leading press association, which once enjoyed at least the superficial appearance of autonomy, has become a government agency and possesses a virtual monopoly over telegraphic news. Agenzia Stefani is an integral part of Mussolini's government. In Germany, Wolffs Telegraphisches Büro, the lead-

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

ing news agency, has collaborated with the government for years. In pre-War Germany Wolffs received certain concessions from the government, such as priority for press messages over the government telegraphic system, in return for distributing news emanating from Wilhelmstrasse. Since the Hitler revolution, Wolffs, with its leading competitor, the Hugenberg agency, Telegraphen-Union (TU), and other agencies, have been merged in a single official agency called the Deutsches Nachrichten Büro (DNB). DNB has been Nazi-fied as thoroughly as Stefani was Fascisticized in Italy ten years ago, and its reports are dictated by the Ministry of Propaganda.

The situation in France is interesting because France is not yet a dictator country and because the claim is repeatedly made by Frenchmen that the Agence Havas, the leading news agency, is an independent organization comparable in the objectivity of its reports to the American agencies. Havas started as the enterprise of a single individual, and its connection with the French government has not always been close. In 1914, for instance, the General Director of Havas, Pognon, without consulting the French government, had been negotiating with the German Wolff agency to cede to the German company the majority of shares in the Agence Havas. A scandal was created which both the government and Havas tried to cover up.

## Mobilizing for Chaos

With the actual outbreak of war in 1914, Pognon committed suicide. The period of close collaboration of the government with Havas dates from the War. Today Havas is supreme in France, handling about 95 per cent of the news furnished to French newspapers. Additional power is given Havas through its advertising agency, which handles more than 80 per cent of the advertising appearing in French newspapers. Stories are current that Havas threatens to withhold advertising from newspapers which show a spirit of independence and criticize the Havas news report or talk of dropping the news contracts. Havas has only two competitors of any importance, the Agence Radio, with which the American United Press is associated for news exchange, and the Agence Fournier, with which Hearst's International News Service is linked. Havas does not directly own any part of the Agence Radio, but certain men who have heavy holdings in Havas also have about 30 per cent of the stock of the Agence Radio.

Although there is no evidence that the French government, or any member of the government, owns Havas stock, the Havas foreign news service has been subventioned by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs since before the War with sums varying from 8,000,000 francs in 1926 to 14,000,000 francs in the nine months' budget of 1932. The Quai d'Orsay continues to make half-

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

hearted denials that Havas receives a subsidy, but there is ample proof that it is very heavily subsidized. Pierre Comert, head of the foreign office press bureau, admitted that certain sums were paid Havas "to compensate them for the actual costs of transmission of French government news to Latin America and the Far East." Still more convincing evidence is contained in the written report of Senator Henry Berenger, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Senate, who acted as reporter for the 1932 Foreign Office Budget. In this report, in explaining the increase of credits for "Special funds for French information abroad," Berenger said:

"The sums granted under this chapter were increased by eight millions in the previous budget [to a total of 34,000,000 francs, or about \$1,400,000 at present exchange rates, for twelve months], for the intensification of publication of French information abroad. . . . The effort of the Department was concentrated on the reorganization of the foreign service of our news agencies, principally the Agence Havas. Certain bureaus of this organization abroad were improved, notably those in the great political capitals [Berlin, London, Rome]; others were created or developed. In addition a Far Eastern service, highly desirable under existing circumstances, was inaugurated in November [Shanghai, and soon Peking and Nanking].

## Mobilizing for Chaos

"The result of this reorganization can be appreciated from the following facts: in the French press, thereafter, the proportion of Havas dispatches originating in Germany, Spain, and central Europe was tripled; in South America, the Agence Havas, almost evicted one year ago, is now in a position to fight the great United States news agencies; finally, the Far Eastern service is well received by the Chinese and Russian press and also by the English press there, which was at first cold to the project.

"By a modification of the reciprocity contract now in existence, the Agence Havas will also be able to create an independent service in the United States. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Adrien Dariac, Deputy, reporting to the Chamber of Deputies on the Foreign Affairs budget for 1933, said: "These inquiries [into French propaganda in America] have allowed us to establish a general basic plan to be undertaken in the near future . . . by collaboration with the Associated Press and the Havas news agency."<sup>4</sup> . . . The Quai d'Orsay assures the technical and financial control of this news service [Havas]."<sup>5</sup>

The implication that the Associated Press, which has a reciprocal news exchange agreement with Havas, was being subsidized, through Havas, by a foreign power, caused consternation in America. The Associated Press hotly denied the accusation,



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

pointing out that the A.P. maintains its own staff of correspondents in Paris and that these correspondents had never bought or intended to furnish official French propaganda in the United States. Kent Cooper, general manager of the Associated Press, attributed the French budget statement to a misunderstanding of the change in exchange of news arrangements with national news agencies with which the Associated Press had been allied. He made public the fact that as long ago as February of 1932, in London, he had met with the heads of Reuters, Wolffs, and Havas, the English, German, and French organizations respectively, and made arrangements with them whereby they could sell their services independently to the members of the Associated Press in the United States and whereby the A.P. could directly serve members independently in England, Germany, and France.<sup>6</sup> For forty years previously, agreements had stipulated that the A.P. was not to serve newspapers in the countries whose news agencies were tied in with the A.P., and that on the other hand the foreign agencies were not to sell their services to United States papers.

The reason for the secrecy in respect to these negotiations, which were not known to American members of the Associated Press until the disclosures of the French budget brought them to light, is not clear. The so-called "liberalization" of the

## Mobilizing for Chaos

news exchange agreements apparently marked a significant change in national policy in regard to news coverage, and had the effect of confirming the suspicions of many observers that Havas wished to obtain more direct channels for "French" news. In March, 1934, the Havas office in New York began to receive a daily report of 12,000 to 14,000 words from the short-wave station at Pontoise. A month later it was announced that Havas had signed short-term contracts with two radio news organizations, the Trans-Radio Press Service and the Radio News Service of America. It was rumored that these radio news agencies, sole clients of Havas in the United States, were to pay in the neighborhood of \$30 a week for a service which would have cost hundreds of dollars a day at the usual cable rates.<sup>7</sup> An indignant storm broke in America. American newspaper interests, hostile to the radio news agencies anyway, raised the cry of French propaganda. They cited the disclosures of the French budget report, and wanted to know how Havas was able to furnish its service to South American newspapers at only a fraction of the cost that American agencies could furnish theirs. The charge was made that Havas had become the largest news agency in the world, with some 2,000 clients, through bargain rates made possible by government subsidy for propaganda.

Havas continued to maintain its innocence. Ca-

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

mille Lemerrier, general manager of Havas for North America, declared that Havas was not an official agency and received no subsidy from the French government or any other government. "The fact is that the French government is a customer of the Agence Havas. The government receives, exactly like a newspaper, the world-wide Havas service for the information of its various departments. It receives it also to have it sent to French colonies in various parts of the world where the newspapers are not economically able to pay for a news report. The government buys the service for them."<sup>8</sup> Léon Rollin, inspector general of the Havas agency, insisted that Havas "leaned over backward" to avoid the stigma of disseminating propaganda. "Havas, which is now ninety-eight years old, is like a cautious old lady, careful and conservative and independent." He said that the agency was capitalized at more than 100,000,000 francs, and had its duties to stockholders, and could not think of engaging in propaganda for fear of harming its business potentialities. He attributed the low cost of Havas service to the radio facilities at Pontoise, where a second powerful short-wave station has just been built. Havas can cover the world, he said, with a saving of 80 per cent of former cable tolls.<sup>9</sup>

The Anglo-Saxon countries are accustomed to congratulating themselves on the freedom of their press associations from government interference.

## Mobilizing for Chaos

They point with pride to the fact that the great continental press associations are either government owned and operated or the property of individual families, whereas the chief news agencies in Anglo-Saxon countries are generally coöperative ventures supported by independent newspapers. They look askance at the unholy alliance between the Agence Havas and the French government and profess to be scandalized by the obliqueness of Gallic morality which sees nothing wrong in such an arrangement. There is a good deal of self-deception and hypocrisy in this attitude. It is true that the official ties between press associations and government are not quite so obvious in Anglo-Saxon countries as in continental Europe, but it cannot be said that the press associations have been any less effective in furthering nationalistic aims.

In Great Britain, the most important domestic news agency, the Press Association, is a mutual enterprise. Founded in 1868 by the provincial papers outside of London, the Press Association has grown into a nation-wide service similar to the Associated Press in the United States. All imperial and foreign news, however, comes from the Reuters agency on an exclusive arrangement. Reuters agency is an interesting example of the transformation produced in a simple business venture by the loyalties of nationalism. The founder of the organization, the original Paul Julius Reuter, was a German who

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

centered his activities in Paris and was chiefly engaged in the pigeon post business over the Belgian gap between the French and German telegraph systems in the middle years of the last century. When the patriotically-inspired regulations of the French government made Paris an inconvenient headquarters for his growing service, he crossed the Channel, Anglicized himself, and played an important part in establishing London's preëminence as a world news center. Reuter profited greatly by British supremacy in the field of electrical communications. With London the cable crossroads of the world, Reuter was able to build up a world-wide organization which dominated the international news business. The gradual merging and identification of a German business man's private venture with the national interests of Great Britain was an inevitable development. British imperialism marched forward with the British communication system and Reuters. From 1858 Reuters maintained close relations with the *Times*, a newspaper which reflects government opinion so faithfully that it may be called semiofficial. Although family interest in Reuters persisted until the World War, the agency became a joint-stock company after 1865, and has recently entered into close alliance with the Press Association, which is expected ultimately to absorb it. From a ruggedly individualistic enterprise, Reuters has therefore

## Mobilizing for Chaos

passed to the control of the British newspapers, and is as highly nationalized an institution as the national press.<sup>10</sup>

The services of Reuters to British nationalism are notorious. Wherever British commerce sought a market or raw materials, wherever British diplomacy sought to extend the imperial demesne, Reuters gave loyal service. Reuters has not been above accepting the subsidies of government and great national industries. During the World War Reuters was the clearing-house for world news that had gone through the purification mill of the British censors. In America constant complaint has been made because of the advantage Reuters possesses in the specially low rates on cables connecting London with the Far East. At one time the Associated Press obtained a large proportion of its Far Eastern news from Reuters in London because the cost (the regular Atlantic press rate) was far below the Pacific cable rate. This news service was edited by British agencies for British interests. The only news reports received in the Far East were such as Great Britain believed the Far East should have, and the only news the world had of Far Eastern happenings was such as Great Britain felt would not injure her own interests.<sup>11</sup> Radio has somewhat lessened the dependence of the world upon Reuters for Far Eastern news, but the challenging of the

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

supremacy of one national news agency by another is not a remedy for the evil of tendentious news.

The American news agencies undoubtedly represent a high degree of unbiased and objective news reporting in comparison with the frank propaganda services of some of the foreign agencies. Too much credence, however, should not be given to agency spokesmen who are continuously proclaiming the integrity of the American agencies and their freedom from service to any special interest. The boast of the Associated Press, the leading American agency, is that the conditions of its ownership and organization prevent obliquity of any kind in its news reports. The Associated Press, like the British Press Association, is a coöperative enterprise, owned by some 1,200 newspapers, most of them in America. These newspapers, it is claimed, have different political creeds, religious "slants," and sectional interests, and therefore no correspondent can write to suit the point of view of the organization, "for it has no point of view of its own, and no human intelligence could define a composite view of its members."<sup>12</sup> The claim is repeatedly made that the Associated Press is, because of its coöperative character, in much less danger of control for propaganda purposes than its leading competitors, the United Press, largely owned by Scripps-Howard interests, and the International News Service, owned by Hearst, both of which are

## Mobilizing for Chaos

private business enterprises which sell news to any customer on the commodity basis for the purpose of making money for their proprietors.

Whether the Associated Press is any safer from control than the privately owned agencies is extremely doubtful. It tends to become, because of its coöperative anonymity, the institutionalized servant of the national press, like the Press Association in England. The basic principle underlying the Associated Press service is that the stream of news will not rise higher than its source, and the 'A.P. report must necessarily reflect the national ambitions and prejudices of the newspaper members that compose it. It should be remembered that the nationalistic tone of a press association or newspaper is never as apparent to the nationals of the country concerned as it is to citizens of other countries. No one has insisted as strongly upon the objectivity and impartiality of the Havas report as the managers and writers of that report. It would be bold to accuse them of insincerity. The same inability to judge the nationalistic tone of their own news reports is characteristic of the American correspondents. There is much evidence to show that the average American news association officer or correspondent has a messianic attitude toward himself and looks upon his news service as the sole repository of "true" truth in a naughty world. The attitude of Kent Cooper, general manager of the



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

Associated Press, toward the mission of his agency is explicable in terms of sheer mysticism. If his interviewer is to be believed, Cooper likes to think of the Associated Press "as a great Buddha sitting imperturbably at the news crossroads of the world, seeing every external thing that happens, stripping all these events of their rancor, hates, subterfuges, their gush and overpraise, and distilling them to their essence."<sup>18</sup>

The press associations have given valuable aid in furthering American imperialism and extending American trade. Whether or not this aid was the result of a deliberately planned patriotic policy, or the accidental result of ordinary business enterprise, the fact remains that the American press associations have been successful competitors of the nationalized foreign news associations in opening up territory to American influence. In South America, for instance, the breaking of the Havas and Reuters monopoly during the World War, and the rapid growth of American news services in all parts of Latin America since that time, have been accompanied by the development of stronger trade ties between North and South America. The total number of words delivered annually to South America by American agencies is estimated at about 30,000,000, and of this number about 10,000,000 words are news of the United States. Thirty columns a day. The Associated Press alone sends

## Mobilizing for Chaos

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## Mobilizing for Chaos

about 16,000,000 words of cable news annually to Latin America, representing about six solid pages of the average newspaper for every day in the year, and receives from Latin America about 1,800,000 words of cable news annually, or about five newspaper columns daily.<sup>14</sup> The news service to Latin America from New York includes news from all parts of the world. Before the World War, Latin America got all of its news of the United States, as well as of the rest of the world, through Europe, and North Americans used to complain that news of the United States could not be fairly presented to Latin America through European channels. Now New York is the bottle neck through which the greater part of the foreign news for Latin America must pass, and Europeans are complaining that news of their activities cannot be fairly presented through the filter of United States channels.

The government of the United States has frequently intimated the usefulness of American news agencies in improving its international position. Testifying before a sub-committee of the Committee on Interstate Commerce of the Senate in 1921, Senator Kellogg and representatives of the State Department urged a flood of American cable news to foreign papers to help American commerce.<sup>15</sup> In subsequent Senate hearings, and notably in the hearings preceding the creation of the Federal Communications Commission, the increased dis-

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

tribution of American press dispatches abroad has been repeatedly urged for the purpose of improving our relations abroad, to help to sell our goods, to counteract prejudice against us, or to counteract active propaganda of foreign countries either for themselves or against us.

The news agencies have tried to soft-pedal this kind of talk. The great selling point for the American associations both at home and abroad is that they produce an objective and non-governmental news service, and any talk of government encouragement and aid is dangerous to their commercial success. Yet the press associations are too dependent upon the government for news coverage and special favors at home, and for coverage and protection abroad, to permit any disharmony in their relations with the government. This becomes especially clear in moments of national crisis. It will be recalled as somewhat typical of the relations of press associations with the government, that when America entered the World War, Major General Leonard Wood sat with the directors of the Associated Press.

The American agencies dare not insist too loudly upon their objectivity or claim anything like an international point of view lest they outrage the cult of nationalism in the United States. They are faced with an embarrassing dilemma. On the one hand they must create the impression that their cor-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

respondents are super-reporters, divorced from political influences, almost above good and evil, and on the other hand they must reassure the public at home that these same correspondents are not internationalists or hyphenated expatriates. The chief of the foreign service of the Associated Press recently reassured an American audience by declaring that the Americans who voluntarily expatriate themselves in order that Americans may see Europe and the rest of the world through American eyes are always complaining that "they cannot get real American apple pie and American coffee with real cream." "Europe fails to win American journalists away from their homeland. I can assure you that the seasoned American newspapermen who are endeavoring to interpret European affairs for the United States press are patriots who will not intentionally mislead their readers."<sup>16</sup>

The major news-gathering agencies of the world are associated in the so-called "Ring Combination," a world-wide network of contractually affiliated agencies and possessing great political significance. Nearly thirty agencies, most of them official or semiofficial, belong to the Ring Combination, although the four major agencies, which divided the world into "reserved territories," are the Associated Press, Havas, Wolffs, and Reuters. The most essential conditions of the contract between these agencies were: (1) that each agency was to

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

create the news report in its own assigned reserved territory and place these items at the disposal of the other contracting agencies; (2) that each contracting agency was obligated to distribute its reports in the reserved territory of another agency only through the agency to which this region has been assigned, and not under any conditions to competing news agencies or to the newspapers themselves. Under these conditions, the world was divided up into the following "reserved territories"—Associated Press: United States, Central America, and, together with Havas, South America; Agence Havas: France and French colonies, the Romanic countries of Europe, and, together with the Associated Press, South America. Wolffs Telegraphisches Büro: Germany; Reuters, Ltd.: England and the British Empire, Holland, and the Far East; Common Reuters-Havas-Wolffs territory: other sections of the world, especially Central Europe, the Scandinavian and Baltic countries, Bulgaria, Rumania, Turkey, Greece, and Russia.<sup>17</sup>

This affiliation of national news agencies has frequently been attacked on the ground that the exchange of news signified an obligation on the part of the receiving agency to use the news. The defenders of the Ring Combination reply that the news reports of Havas, for instance, are not sent directly to the Associated Press in New York, but

## Mobilizing for Chaos

are given to the Associated Press correspondents in Paris. The Associated Press men are not obligated to send this "French" news to America, but simply have an exclusive right to the Havas reports. It is also pointed out that a world-wide independent news agency might be more desirable, but that such an enterprise might run amuck, not only because of the enormous cost of such a service, but even more because of the political difficulties which would make news coverage by foreigners in certain countries almost impossible. The suggestion has even been made that pooling of news by the members of the Ring Combination actually secures greater impartiality, because the news report of any individual member must be regulated by the highly diversified wants of the international Ring.

The most recent development has been the breakdown of the Ring Combination because of the demands of nationalistic politics. According to the agreement concluded secretly at London in February, 1932, by the Associated Press, Reuters, Wolffs, and Havas, the old regulation is repealed, and each agency may sell its service independently in the former "reserved territory" of each of the others.<sup>18</sup> To a certain extent this move was forced by the competition of independent agencies, since the United Press and the International News Service, for example, had been signing up clients right and left in Europe, but political considerations



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

were of greater importance, at least to the European agencies. Havas, as has been explained above, immediately invaded the United States with an extensive news report in response to the propaganda program of the French foreign office. To date no United States newspapers have subscribed to the service, but radio news services are trying it, and several clients have been found in Canada. The Associated Press, on the other hand, has not reported any new clients in Europe, where competing American agencies are already intrenched.

The various national news agencies are apparently beginning a combat the like of which has not previously been seen in the world news field. The affiliation of the old line governmental agencies which has dominated the continent for more than fifty years has been disrupted, and the rupture marks the beginning of an era of fierce competition. The relations of Havas with Reuters and Wolffs (now the DNB) are not good today, and with Stefani of Italy they are very bad. Havas' relations with the Associated Press are strained, not only because of the threat of invading the American market, but also because of the bitter warfare between Havas and the American agencies for the capture of South America and other news markets. An exchange of news continues among members of the Ring Combination, and correspondents still receive first copies of member reports, but the three

## Mobilizing for Chaos

big European agencies have all initiated plans for independent coverage of world news. Havas, for instance, which formerly depended upon the Associated Press in New York, Reuters in London, etc., for its foreign news, has now, at the insistence of the French government, put its own staffs of French newspapermen in Berlin, Rome, London, New York, and Washington to cover the news of these countries at its origin for the French press. The war of national interests in the world news business is now unrestricted on all fronts.

What shall be said of the independent news agencies, whose existence might serve as a check on the nationalistic excesses of the leading or official agencies? In many countries competing independents have been wholly eliminated, and only in the United States are independent agencies of much more than negligible importance in terms of the size of the public served. In theory, an association such as the United Press Associations, affiliated with the Scripps-Howard interests or the International News Service, operated by William Randolph Hearst, or the foreign bureaus maintained by a few large American newspapers, is more susceptible to "slanting" than a coöperative venture. In practice, however, the question may well be asked if the liberal tradition of the Scripps organization is not a better defense against abuses than the policies of a mutual organization which are

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

forced to change with every shift of opinion of the national press. Even Hearst, however one may question the wisdom of his policies, has shown more courage than either of the other two agencies in opposing the policies of the American and foreign governments, and has had the happy distinction in these nationalistic days of being barred from both England and France. Actually, the independents are subject to the same conditions of news gathering which affect all correspondents. In order to understand the difficulties of objective reporting of world affairs, these conditions must be briefly described.

First and foremost of the influences which affect the foreign correspondent is the press which he serves. It is axiomatic in the news field that a correspondent's work can rise no higher than the level of the concern which pays his salary. In the United States the newspaper is a commercial undertaking which derives the major part of its income from advertising and the rest from circulation. The Big Business aspect of American newspaper publishing has been greatly accentuated in recent years by the growth of great newspaper properties, representing enormous capital investment in equipment and services, and by a tendency toward consolidation which has eliminated many of the small independent newspapers with small capitalization. The de-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

pendence of American newspapers upon advertising is of great significance in any explanation of the character of the American press. The influence of any individual advertiser upon newspaper policy is only of incidental importance, but there is great significance in the fact that the whole tone of the American press is determined by the necessity to produce newspapers which will be of the greatest possible usefulness as advertising vehicles. High advertising rates demand large circulations. Large circulations demand "hot" news, that is, news that is printed immediately after the overt act and is more or less sensational or dramatic. Large circulations also demand news and editorial matter that is pleasant reading for the masses of population. The result has been that American newspapers have outvied one another's enterprise in the speed and quantity of their news reports and in "dressing up" the news so as to best catch the eye of the mob. The text of the newspaper stories, in order to bring the mob back the next day, must be thoroughly "American," or, in other words, it must not differ too widely from what the average American wants and expects to read about his own country and foreign countries.

The result has been a strong tendency in the American press to defend the *status quo*, and to indulge in only those forms of sensationalism that will not shake the political and economic set-up of

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

the country and thus endanger the financial security of the big newspaper properties or of the great business interests which support them. This advertising interest operates as a major influence in local affairs, slightly less in national affairs, and is least perceptible in international news. As a result, many American newspapers look upon foreign news as a happy hunting ground for sensationalism, since the effects of foreign news upon domestic economy are not obvious. At the same time, the post-War problems of debts, disarmament, and tariffs have created a demand for foreign news that will satisfy the emotional needs of those groups whose interests are involved. Above all, foreign news must not antagonize the prejudices of the mob, which has a head well stored with preconceptions.

American correspondents abroad have complained frequently and bitterly of the "remote control" of the home office. The insistent demand for "spot news" works against an adequate interpretation of the social, economic, and political forces at work. The demand for immediate and timely coverage of events ties the correspondent to the cable or radio. In order to avoid delay the correspondent is compelled to keep on good terms with Government officials, government press bureaus, and the censor, with the result that press dispatches are apt to be colored, deleted, or "camouflaged."

## Mobilizing for Chaos

The sensationalism required by the home office exaggerates conflict and reduces the complicated relations of international life to the stereotyped heroics of nineteenth-century melodrama. For years the press of this country has been talking up international tension in Europe and the Orient, with the constantly repeated warning that war is imminent. The latest manifestation of the war spirit bristling in the columns of American newspapers is the vogue for "uncensored" pictures of the World War. Open conflict in any part of the world is an excuse for an orgy of sensationalism. The parties in these conflicts are reduced to the orthodox patterns of cheap fiction, and the play of forces at work is reduced to the simplicity of a combat between desperadoes and posse in *Nick Carter Among the Cattle Rustlers*. The effect of these methods is to emphasize a picture of the world as a collection of armed camps whose sinister warriors, generally in the name of nationalism, are about to spring at one another's throats. The principle of nationalism is vividly accentuated; complex maladjustment is generally simplified to a raw clash of national interest on the plane of jungle warfare; and the reader of the news reports is thrown into a state of alarm by either the direct or indirect suggestion that his own nation is or will be involved, and his patriotism is stimulated by the harrowing thought that eternal vigilance is

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

necessary to defend his country from the greedy machinations of foreigners who are ready to perform any kind of brutal violence in the name of patriotism.

The attack of Japan upon Shanghai in 1932 let loose a flood of sensational headlines and "eyewitness" accounts of the fighting. Typical headlines were "Chinese Army Threatens Foreign Zone," "Truce On, U. S. Mission Bombed," "7 Jap Ships Bombard Nanking; Americans Fleeing for Lives," "Floyd Gibbons Tells of Baby Killings," "U. S. Rushes Troops to Shanghai." Floyd Gibbons sent home the following reassuring news: "Believe me, boys and girls, you don't know how helpful it is to know that three more American destroyers are out there in the Yangtze with their guns uncovered and that the Asiatic fleet is full-drafting it up the China Sea, with the good old 31st Army Regiment on the Chaumont and a gang of 500 leathernecks with them."<sup>19</sup> Not all of the stories were as chauvinistic and tom-tom thumping as Floyd Gibbons' dispatch and the quoted headlines. Yet the elements of national conflict in the episode were often sensationally exploited, and the circulation departments of American newspapers reported large sales. The attack of the Dollfuss government upon the Vienna Socialists in February, 1934, was handled by American newspapers with the implied suggestion that this might be "the international in-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

cident" which would set off the conflagration of war among the Great Powers just as the murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand touched off the powder barrel in 1914. The New York *Evening Post* announced in its front page streamer headline, "500 Slain in Austria; Big Guns Roar: Paris May Send Army, Berenger Hint." The *Daily Mirror* set the number of Austrian dead at 1,000; the *Daily News* doubled the number with an estimate of 2,000 dead.

The distortion of news to appeal to the "box office," the newspaper customers whose ideas are governed by national prejudices, extends to all kinds of events. A good "human interest" story remains a better sales inducement than serious information. Rumania is the operetta setting for the amours of King Carol and his voluptuous mistress, Madame Lupescu; that Rumania is beset with serious economic and political problems affecting the peace of Europe is ignored for the romance of royal sin written by the correspondents of southeastern Europe. Any kind of obscure event or crackpot utterance is used by the Hearst press to build up a Japanese bogey in the United States. A sample collection of headlines from the Hearst papers of the spring of 1934 includes such gems as "Japan's Fleet Commander Admits Preparations to Fight United States," "Theory of White Supremacy Challenged by Noted Strategist," "Russia-Japan



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

War Involving U. S. Feared," "Japan Pushes Secret Plan to Enlarge Navy." The memory of the provocation of the Spanish American War by Pulitzer and Hearst means nothing to the headline writer responsible for "Japs Sneer at Flag in Curt 'Apology.'" The newspaper exploitation of the "War Games" of the United States Navy in the Pacific ties up with the constant irritation of Far Eastern news and creates an association of ideas impossible to miss. The distortion is not always the fault of the correspondents, as when the *New York Evening Post*, receiving a sincere and honest account of H. R. Knickerbocker's observations in Russia, headlined these dispatches with language that expressed the bitter prejudice of American toryism. The headlines not only counteracted the good that was done by the articles, but were the only impression of the series carried away by thousands of "headline" readers who never get through the body of a newspaper story. A similar irresponsibility recently prompted a picture agency to distribute as a photograph of the unemployed storming the King's palace in England a picture which was made of a crowd assembling to welcome the King to his home after his illness, more than a year before.

American practices are mild compared with the pandering to national prejudices in many foreign countries. Foreign newspapers, especially in Eu-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

rope, demand news of America that will hold the United States up to ridicule and scorn. Certain foreign correspondents in the United States have for years been supplying the foreign press with news that will gratify national prejudices. American news has been carefully combed for any scraps that will magnify and corroborate the myth of "Uncle Shylock." The depression in America has been interpreted as the poetically just consequence of our credit policies toward Europe. Germans are informed that sporadic gatherings of German-Americans are conclusive evidence that Hitlerism is sweeping America. Many Europeans believe that Indians, bathing beauties, and gangsters infest our streets, and that the country is in immediate danger of being taken over by organized crime. At the time of the Lindbergh kidnaping, a correspondent cabled to the London *Evening Star* that the racketeer Capone had negotiated directly with President Hoover to return the Lindbergh baby if Capone were "immediately released" from prison, if the United States left his gang alone, and if Republicans promised that if Hoover were reelected the prohibition law would not be changed to interfere with Capone's business. The correspondence between Capone and the President was described as "tantamount to an ambassadorial note from one sovereign to another."

Terrorism is used by dictatorships when natural

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

prejudice is not deemed a sufficient guarantee that newspapermen abroad will distort the news to suit domestic purposes. Italy threatens Italian writers abroad with the confiscation of their property and loss of their civil rights if they are unpatriotic in their utterances. Germany, under the new press law, promises the death penalty for high treason to German correspondents and newspapermen abroad who write "atrocities propaganda" and other matter contrary to Nazi scripture.

The conditions under which the correspondent works offer the other great obstacle to accurate reporting. The foreign correspondent is the target of compulsions and pressures ranging from censorship, physical mishandling, and expulsion, to the most subtle appeals to sympathy. Conditions are relatively good in Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries and relatively bad in the dictator countries; in no country is the correspondent a free agent, immune from the corrupting influence of the environment in which he is placed.

In all countries the correspondent is forced to remain on good terms with his sources of news, and since the news is largely government-controlled in modern states, the correspondent is forced to toady to government agents to protect his livelihood. Moreover, the average correspondent is not himself able to travel about a country to see events and

## Mobilizing for Chaos

judge conditions with his own eyes but must depend upon the news agencies and press of the country in which he is located for the bulk of his information. When this press is under the control of the government, as in Russia, Italy, and Germany, or subsidized and rabidly chauvinistic, as in France, the correspondent's usefulness as an accurate reporter is decreased in proportion to the amount of distortion in the national press upon which he depends. In the third place, all correspondents are subject to the influence of the "Berlin environment" or the "London environment" or the "Washington environment" or the "Geneva environment," by which is meant the multitudinous appeals to identify one's self with the official, or semi-official, or national, life of the news capital which is the correspondent's host. Correspondents are human, and as human beings they are unable to insulate themselves against the desire to cultivate friendly relations with people of importance and social and political influence. Neither can they easily resist the prestige of the culture with which they are in intimate contact, nor the continuous appeal to their sympathies on behalf of "poor Germany" or "poor France," or "poor Yugoslavia." As a reward for diluting their Americanism with a love for the mother country or the fatherland or *La Belle France* they are offered some very tangible compensations ranging from press passes and re-

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

duced railroad rates to charming hostesses and the ribbon of the Legion of Honor or the cross of Polonia Restituta or the cross of the Order of St. George.

In addition to these general influences, a government-inspired censorship in some form exists in most of the countries of the world. The reading of such a record as George Seldes' *You Can't Print That* will suggest the variety of heartbreaking obstacles which are placed in the path of the correspondent by foreign governments. The tendency since the War has been steadily in the direction of increased tampering with the news-stream. The large number of incidents involving intimidation of correspondents is a sign of the rigors of this age of jealous and chauvinistic nationalism. Fearless, independent reporting is being inexorably ground away between the stone of government control of sources of news below and government censorship above. A few examples will clarify the conditions of work in the gathering of world news in the nineteen-thirties:

Germany: German press censorship is probably now the strictest in Europe. The newspapers are thoroughly coördinated, and news has a monotonous sameness in all papers. As a result of government interference, it is estimated that the loss in newspaper circulation in Germany since Hitler's

## Mobilizing for Chaos

advent to power has been more than 30 per cent. Between three and four hundred German newspapers have voluntarily ceased publication, and several hundred more have either been suppressed by the government or emasculated. Reporters and editorial writers are licensed by the Ministry of Propaganda. As government appointees, they are unable to express any but government views without running the risk of being permanently expelled from journalistic occupations.

Foreign correspondents are not officially censored, but dispatches which are not favorable to the government may be delayed or garbled. Correspondents continue to have free access to telephone communication with Paris or London, but the correspondent who abuses the privilege may find himself under suspicion and the victim of reprisals. A glaring instance of this method of intimidation was the case of Edgar Ansel Mowrer, former Berlin correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*. Because he wrote articles which were interpreted as unfavorable and unfair to Germany, Mowrer received personal threats, and later his office in Chicago was informed that it would be wise to withdraw him from Berlin. Finally the American State Department was unofficially approached by the German Foreign Office with the request that it ask the publishers of the *Chicago Daily News* to recall their correspondent, since the German government

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

was no longer in a position to guarantee Mowrer's safety. Mowrer left. Correspondents of other nationalities have been physically mistreated. Letters have been opened, and railroad passengers have been relieved of news dispatches which they were carrying out of the country. The Nazi Press Department checks on what correspondents write about Germany by carefully reading several hundred foreign periodicals and newspapers, which are kept on file for future reference. Other reports on published matter are received from German agents abroad.

Terrorism and censorship are reinforced by an elaborate technique for controlling the sources of news. Even before the Hitler revolution, the German government had given much attention to its contacts with foreign correspondents. A Press Section (*Presseabteilung der Reichsregierung*) had been established under the direct authority of the Chancellor, and eight *Referenten*, under the direction of a so-called "Press Chief," were points of contact with the correspondents. Each of the *Referenten* was supposed to be an authority on the press and social peculiarities of the part of the world assigned to him, and he tried to interpret official German news in such a way as to make it most acceptable to the public with whose newspaper correspondents he was in contact. These activities are now under the ministration of Dr.

## Mobilizing for Chaos

Goebbels, whose solicitude for the education of the correspondents goes so far as to compel him to gather the foreign reporters together from time to time to lecture them on the duties and responsibilities of foreign correspondents and the high purposes of the German government. The garbled and incomplete accounts of the terroristic executions at the end of June, 1934, are illustrations of the effective bottling of German news. Frustrated at the sources of news, correspondents had to send rumors or official hand-outs. It is also arresting to realize that news is sometimes given to foreign correspondents for political reasons and suppressed at home. The full text of Vice Chancellor von Papen's critical speech at the University of Marburg was made available to foreign correspondents, but not a word of it was published in Germany. During the bloody purge of June, General Goering prefaced a news conference with the words: "You may see some disturbances during the day. You are advised that they are not to be published in Germany."

With censorship, constant surveillance, intimidation, indoctrination, government-controlled news sources, and an untrustworthy press, the position of the correspondent in Germany is a perilous one. Torn between the demands of his home clientele and the realities of his existence as the guest of Germany, he is of necessity forced to face the temptation to temporize, or get out.



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

Italy: Press conditions in Italy resemble those of Germany with the difference that Italy has passed through the first repressive stages of dictatorship and has the press so well under control that it can dispense with some of the more extreme forms of intimidation now practiced in the young Fascist state north of the Alps. The press is thoroughly under the thumb of the government, and no opposition newspaper is tolerated. While some slight variations in editorial expression are allowed, all Italian newspapers regularly receive instructions from the central government as to what news should be played up and what news should be played down, and editors are praised or rebuked for their handling of various stories. This close supervision has resulted in a press which is notorious for the use made of it by the Palazzo Chigi to manipulate Italian public opinion to strengthen the government's diplomatic position. It is not at all unusual to discover (if one credits the newspapers) that the entire Italian people is roused over an issue which is being negotiated internationally. The barbarous mistreatment of opposition editors has practically ceased, but the reason for the improvement is not a more liberal policy of government but rather the thorough Fascisticization of editors who survived the extremely repressive period of Italian Fascism.

The persecution of foreign correspondents,

## Mobilizing for Chaos

which occurred frequently during the nineteen-twenties, has become relatively rare, although not longer ago than February, 1930, Albin E. Johnson, former Geneva correspondent of the *New York World*, was prevented from crossing the border into Italy because of the articles criticizing Fascism which he had written for the *World*. The decrease in persecution is not due so much to a change in Italian policy as it is to the greater discretion of correspondents who have learned how far they can go with safety. Censorship in the sense of outright deletion or seizure of news dispatches, has virtually ceased, but dispatches are subject to the "*revisi6ne*," or control of dispatches. Under this system a dispatch may be delayed until it has lost much of its value, but it will finally be allowed to go unless it contains a flagrant falsehood. Like Germany, Italy has a government press bureau with special officials assigned to look after correspondents from the various countries. The official in charge of contacts with American correspondents spent many years in the Embassy at Washington and speaks English fluently. The official press bureau is a department of the Foreign Office, but it supplies information from all the departments of government. About two hundred foreign newspapers are read daily to keep tab on the statements of correspondents in Italy.

As in Germany, correspondents are forced to rely

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

mainly upon official news sources, including a government-controlled press and a government news agency.

**Russia:** The Russian press and news agency are government enterprises. All news, whether domestic or foreign, is carefully censored and revised before publication.

Correspondents generally agree that while censorship in Russia is all-powerful, it is probably one of the most intelligent and least objectionable censorships in the world. Unlike Germany and Italy, where messages will be examined secretly by censors and will often be delayed without the correspondent's knowledge, Russia has an "open" censorship, and the censor goes over the copy in the writer's presence. The censors have shown a reasonable attitude toward their work and are willing to discuss points at issue with the correspondent. Correspondents are frequently able to persuade the censor that deleted passages should be allowed to remain in the dispatch. For the past five or six years there has been no censorship of news sent by mail, but it is always understood that the responsibility for such news will fall on the correspondent if the authorities object later. The Russian censorship is chiefly an inconvenience as far as the average correspondent is concerned, although several important stories, such as the expulsion of

## Mobilizing for Chaos

Trotsky and the explosion of a bomb in the headquarters of the G.P.U., were untouchable for a period of time. The censor is in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. The tendency of Soviet control of outgoing news seems to be in the direction of regimenting the sources of news in Russia rather than the older and cruder method of censorship with a blue pencil.

News antagonistic to Russia generally comes from Riga, Helsingfors, Bucharest, or Warsaw, where "White" Russians maintain centers of anti-Soviet information.

Other European countries: Correspondents in France are subject to very little interference, although in times of crisis the Ministry of Interior clamps down an inefficient but annoying censorship of outgoing telegraphic messages. Several foreign correspondents have been threatened with expulsion from France because of stories contrary to French national interests, and William Randolph Hearst was actually forbidden entrance to France for several years. While French newspapers are given great liberty to attack personalities and parties in the government, they are frequently subsidized by politicians, munitions makers, business men, or the Foreign Office, and are not reliable sources of information. The reliability of the Agence Havas has already been discussed. The

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

tendency of French news control is in the direction of restricting and coloring news sources, as in other European countries. The press department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had fallen into decay, was revived two years ago and, under the direction of Pierre Comert, formerly chief of the information section of the League of Nations at Geneva, has become very active in supplying official French news.

The freedom of correspondents in Spain varies from week to week. Although censorship is doubly prohibited by the Spanish Constitution, dispatches are subject to meddling during "states of alarm," which occur frequently. Conditions for correspondents in southeastern Europe are bad. Messages are frequently garbled, and when an event of outstanding importance occurs, all telegraph and telephone wires may be forbidden to newspapermen. Clarence Streit, of the *New York Times*, and others have been expelled from Rumania. Other Balkan countries have either expelled correspondents outright or made conditions so bad that further sojourn was impossible. Jugoslavia ransacks the personal effects of the correspondent, and Hungary provides the correspondent with an official "guide" whom it is impossible to shake off. Espionage of American correspondents has been reported recently in Austria.

In survey, Europe today presents the following

## Mobilizing for Chaos

spectacle: Ten countries, Italy, Germany, Russia, Portugal, Austria, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia, Hungary, Albania, and Lithuania, with a total population of about 307,000,000, dictate absolutely what their people shall read. In six other countries, Poland, Rumania, Greece, Spain, Esthonia, and Latvia, with a population of about 60,000,000, active censorship exists, but the effort to warp the minds of the citizenry has not proceeded as far as in the super-censored countries. In only eleven countries, Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, the Irish Free State, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, with a population of about 136,000,000 (two-thirds of which is in England and France), do citizens cling, sometimes precariously, to freedom of newspaper expression. Only about 25 per cent of Europe's inhabitants, therefore, enjoy anything even remotely resembling freedom of the press.

Latin America: Latin American countries show great zeal in trying to control outgoing news. The recent chain of revolutions and wars has intensified government efforts to prevent unfavorable news from being circulated. Latin American censorship efforts in general lack the finesse of European methods, and consist mainly of intimidation, expulsion, and interference with the transmission of dispatches. Brazil tries to prevent the sending out

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

of any news "injurious to Brazil," and the list of taboos includes almost everything that a correspondent might want to report. George H. Corey, former correspondent for the *New York Times* in Brazil, was expelled on the charge of having written that a certain general had declared martial law and that a drought was causing damage to the northeastern states of Brazil. Both of these stories were interpreted as inimical to the best interests of Brazil. In this case the stories were not written by Corey at all, but by the correspondent for the *London Times*. The Brazilian officials insisted that since the *New York Times* and *London Times* both had the same name, they must be the same newspaper.<sup>20</sup>

Argentina recently held the All-American Cables Company responsible for any more reports of domestic trouble. As the company holds a concession from the government allowing it to operate, company officials carefully scanned all dispatches for questionable statements. Chile has a new law which states that all who spread "false or harmful news or information destined to produce or introduce distrust or disturbances in the order, tranquillity and security of the country, in the financial *régimes* or in the stability of public securities or properties" shall be "guilty of a crime against the interior security of the State," and shall be punished by exile. Machado managed to conceal

## Mobilizing for Chaos

the real condition of Cuba for years by repressive measures against the domestic press and by virtually bribing foreign correspondents with lavish hospitality. Carl Byoir, a New York publicity man, and others were hired by Machado to handle Cuban propaganda. It has been estimated that the Machado government spent at least \$4,000,000 on propaganda, press agent fees, and entertainment of correspondents and influential visitors, who were fed on fine foods and wines and publicity hand-outs. Especially ironical was the fact that while the Seventh Pan-American Conference was in session in December, 1933, at Montevideo and passing resolutions favoring the protection of newspapermen and the principle of fraternity and conciliation among American states, the government of Uruguay, fearing the external effects of news of labor and political disturbances in the capital, had clamped down a strict censorship on the cables.

The Orient: Correspondents in China are embarrassed by the political disunion of the country, by official censorship and propaganda, and by the high cost of transmitting news abroad. The two principal sources of official news are the Bureau of Intelligence and Publicity of the Central Government in Nanking, which maintains a branch office at Shanghai, and the Kuo Min, or government news agency. Censors are stationed in all central



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

cable and wireless offices by the Ministry of Communications, and they examine all dispatches before they are sent out of the country. Unless a correspondent has a confirmation of his wordage cabled back to him, he has no way of knowing whether or not his story has been altered. The continuous annoyance of official interference has forced correspondents to make frequent use of devious and intricate means of communication, such as operation from the British concession at Hongkong, where stories may be cabled without restrictions. The Chinese native press has been emasculated by a new press law of brutal severity, and hence is an unreliable aid in news coverage.

Japan: Foreign correspondents in Japan are generally agreed that conditions there are not oppressive. Dispatches are never molested, although they are carefully read by the Foreign Office press bureau. Conferences are held three or four times a week with a Foreign Office official especially assigned to press contact work, and specific criticism will sometimes be made of stories sent out by correspondents. Correspondents are allowed great latitude, however, in saying what they wish about Japan and its policies provided they do not criticize the Imperial House. The Japanese native press is unreliable, since it is under strict government control. Instructions are sent to editors by the government, as in Italy, telling them what subjects are

## Mobilizing for Chaos

banned from newspaper discussion. Some of the taboos are extremely trivial, and the number of them is so great that one Japanese newspaper recently complained that "it is almost impossible to remember the things that must not be mentioned." The Japanese news agencies, Shimbun Rengo Sha, or Rengo, and Dempo-Tsushin Sha, or Den-Tsuu, are supervised by the government.

Coverage of the Sino-Japanese conflict in China was made particularly onerous by petty espionage. Both Japan and China used spies, but Japan went to far more ridiculous extremes. One correspondent found a "detecto-phone" secreted under a sofa in his room. Another correspondent decided to make a trip to Mukden and managed to lose his spy. To express his resentment against the spy system he sent the following telegram to a Japanese intelligence officer attached to General Honjo's staff: "Major Watari, care Yamato Hotel, Mukden. Arriving three o'clock this afternoon. Please notify my spy." These incidents were produced by war, however, and are not of special significance in an inquiry into the regular peacetime corruption of world news.

League of Nations: The peculiarities of Geneva as an international capital have made it unusually interesting from the standpoint of the play of national forces whose interests are represented there.

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

In theory, the League of Nations is an international organization which transcends the selfish interests of the nations which compose it. The League is based upon a cosmopolitan and coöperative principle, and without the existence of a sufficient body of public opinion throughout the world favoring that principle, the League would be left without mandate or authority. In reality, much of the activity in Geneva arises from the conflict between the centripetal forces of internationalism and the centrifugal forces of nationalism for the control of public opinion. In other words, the corporate identity known as the League of Nations, and those sections of society which subscribe to the international principles of the League, are seeking constantly through the press and other channels of propaganda, to defend and strengthen the position of the League, while at the same time the various nations and the sections of society motivated by extremely nationalistic principles are attempting to use the same channels to gain uniquely national ends. The strategic importance of public opinion to both groups is reflected in the vast bulk of propaganda produced at Geneva, and in the quasi-diplomatic status of press experts and newspapermen attached to the League.

The organization of coverage, in terms of personnel and physical equipment, is of remarkable extensiveness and efficiency.<sup>21</sup> During important

## Mobilizing for Chaos

sessions, such as the opening of the Disarmament Conference, in the neighborhood of five hundred accredited correspondents have been present at Geneva, besides a host of press experts and publicity people working for governments or private organizations. The permanent organization of League of Nations correspondents, called the *Association Internationale des Journalistes Accrédités auprès de la Société des Nations*, ordinarily has nearly two hundred members, is recognized by the League Secretariat, and enjoys a semiofficial status in the League organization. All correspondents are given ample accommodations for work by the Secretariat, and have at their disposal radio, teleprinter, telegraph, telephone, and fast mail services.

The variety of news sources which the correspondent has at his disposal indicates not only the difficulties of obtaining a fair and impartial impression of the meaning of events but also the zeal of the numerous special interests represented at Geneva to procure news reports favorable to themselves. The most important news source is the Information Section of the League, an official press bureau which tries to coördinate the work of correspondents with the political activities of the League. Under the direction of Arthur Sweetser, an American, the Information Section provides correspondents with all official documents, including reports, memoranda, proposals, amendments,

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

announcements of meetings and programs, and communiqués, besides providing liaison officers to work with correspondents and to furnish additional information or answer special inquiries. An idea of the extensiveness of the activities of this super-publicity organization can be gained from the fact that in one so-called dead month it distributed 32,000 communiqués on 87 subjects, 1,000 copies of an article summarizing the work of the League Council, 1,000 articles on the work of the League for the month, 400 copies of the program of meetings, 840 copies of an "Overseas News Sheet," 160 copies of Radio Bulletins, 200 review copies with explanatory articles—a total of 35,600 documents, not including 9,000 copies of Council documents which were distributed to newspapermen in Geneva. In addition, every day a "press review," giving a cross-section of the views of the press of almost every country on questions of international interest, is prepared, and liaison officers of the Information Section report developments from foreign capitals. Nationalistic politics have recently affected the liaison offices; the offices in Berlin and Tokyo have been abandoned, and the one in Rome is not functioning well.

While the services of the Information Section are indispensable, the recognition of its propaganda character is inescapable. The policy of the Information Section is to assimilate the journalists

## Mobilizing for Chaos

as a functional part of the League of Nations, and by every courtesy to encourage their active interest. It is the intention to make each journalist feel that he is participating in a great movement, and that he is personally privileged to contribute to the development of a mechanism of peaceful international life. Communiqués are drafted by the Information Section for the express purpose of keeping sensation out of the news, of ignoring or minimizing differences of opinion so as not to stir up national animosities, and of emphasizing the congenial coöperation of League activity. Further, the Information Section seeks to influence the point of view of reporters by direct criticism. The Section members follow the reports of correspondents through a clipping department which reads more than two hundred representative newspapers daily. When it is believed that a report will react unfavorably on the League, a member of the Information Section may suggest informally to the correspondent that he had the wrong slant on his story and that he would not have failed to judge the event correctly if he had viewed it through "Geneva glasses."

The diplomatic delegations of the various nations are another source of influence upon the correspondent. The importance of the press expert in modern diplomacy may be gauged by the fact that at the Disarmament Conference, Germany, the

## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

United States, Spain, Poland, Russia, and Turkey each had one press expert officially listed as part of its technical advisory staff, while France had two and Italy four. In addition to the official list, there were a number of press experts whose offices were otherwise titled. Japan, for example, was unofficially reported as having no less than eleven press experts, including three each for the navy, army, and political groups. The function of these governmental publicity men is to gain the confidence of the correspondent and to seek to color his views in favor of the interests of the nation which the press expert represents.

The devices used by press experts to influence the correspondent are of several types. Delegation communiqués, distributed by the Information Section, are often not intended for League members at all, but are so labeled as a means of bringing them to the attention of the correspondents in an official way. Frequently diplomats will invite correspondents to teas or receptions. The purposes of such meetings are to establish a friendly contact with the correspondents and to furnish background material and the national point of view in such manner that the correspondent will be induced to treat news of that country sympathetically. For the reporter who resists these environmental pressures, reporting becomes a game of trying to keep out of print what the other fellow wants to get in and to

## Mobilizing for Chaos

get into print what the other fellow wants to keep out. Although it is gossiped in League circles that Hearst is unable to keep correspondents at Geneva for long periods because they become infected with internationalism, League propaganda may have the paradoxical effect described by Reginald Wright Kauffman, correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune* at the League of Nations: "That's another of the good things about the internationalistic League of Nations: It makes everybody connected with it, or at all in touch with it, in Geneva, such a good nationalist. Not only delegates; the American correspondents become more and more American the longer they cover the League."<sup>22</sup>

Semiofficial and private organizations contribute other influences which help to build the "Geneva environment." Peace societies are especially active in publicizing their work by organizing luncheons, receptions, and other social events at which the correspondent is a welcome guest. Through these organizations the correspondent is familiarized with the activities of peace workers in obtaining petitions and resolutions used in an effort to persuade League members that world public opinion demands peace. By living in this atmosphere, correspondents are apt to acquire the subconscious feeling that they are taking part in a great crusade. In addition to personal contacts, a number of propaganda journals are published at



## Nationalism and the Corruption of News

Geneva, such as *Disarmament*, sponsored by international organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union; and the *Bulletin* of the Union Mondiale de la Femme pour la Concorde Internationale. Nationalistic and commercial interests are represented by the press releases of such organizations as the Association for the Legitimate Defense of the Rights of Japan, with headquarters in Tokyo, or by personal contact work by publicity agents of the type of William B. Shearer, who looked after the business interests of American munitions makers at the Tripartite Naval Conference.

In summary, the world is moving rapidly into an era of universal obstruction of the free flow of information and opinion. In the name of nationalism, the fetish of the decade, freedom of speech and the press has already been denied to approximately nine-tenths of the world's population, including the populations of Russia, China, Japan, Germany, Italy, Austria, most colonial possessions, and smaller states in the Balkans and South America. Interference with the traditional function of the press as a purveyor of unbiased information is increasing in other countries which preserve meaningless guarantees of freedom of speech and the press in their constitutions and statutes. Everywhere, the importance of regimenting the public

## Mobilizing for Chaos

mind for national progress and defense has been recognized, and the times are witnessing an unprecedented professionalization of propaganda activities in the form of press bureaus, press experts, the semidiplomatic status of newspapermen, the emphasis of economic and social compulsions affecting the journalist, and the organization of programs to inculcate chauvinistic patriotism. The League of Nations partakes of the character of a counter-propaganda agency, and its prestige has lately been losing ground. The existence of a non-political, fact-finding organization for the dissemination of world news is becoming progressively more impossible, and the immediate prospect is a checkerboard of nationalistic states whose populations are forced to obey the whims of their political masters by the deliberate manipulation of public opinion.

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

THE dangers arising from the corruption of world news have been perceived by those who profit by the free exchange of information as well as by many of those whose thinking is influenced by social idealism. Unfortunately, it cannot be said that either of these groups is numerically strong. The masses remain without any realization of the course of events in the news world and are mainly under the influence of those interests which are encouraging the nationalization and regimentation of information. Measures for defense against the flood of censorship, distortion, and propaganda have been undertaken by the following: (a) The League of Nations; (b) national governments, either in co-operation with other nations or independently; (c) international organizations of journalists; (d) national organizations of journalists; (e) private organizations desiring the protection of news channels. The activities of these interests have undoubtedly been beneficial, if only in the sentimental sense of reminding the world of a humanitarian ideal, but it must be admitted frankly that no action by any body of protesters has succeeded in stemming the spread of news exploitation for nationalistic ends.

## Mobilizing for Chaos

The League of Nations, theoretically the logical agency to guard world news channels, gave its attention to the problem in 1925 when the Sixth Assembly passed a resolution calling for a Conference of Press Experts. The press experts duly convened at Geneva in August of 1927 and adopted resolutions expressing the desire that "newspapers and news agencies of the world should deem it their duty to take stringent measures to avoid the publication or distribution" of biased, obviously inaccurate, highly exaggerated, or deliberately distorted news "calculated to cause undesirable misunderstanding among nations and suspicions detrimental to international peace," and should also consider the possibility of active international cooperation for the attainment of this purpose, which is in conformity with the spirit of the League of Nations. It made an appeal to the press of the world "to prepare the way for moral disarmament," and favored "Regional Press Understandings" between the press of groups of neighboring states with the object of promoting international harmony. It also recommended immediate conferences of press representatives, especially of the Balkan countries, in order to reach amicable understandings which would "draw closer bonds between the Press of their countries" and thus "favorably influence public opinion."<sup>1</sup>

These were lofty sentiments, but no machinery

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

was proposed for the enforcement of any of the recommendations, and the work of the conference was of no real value except in so far as the wide publicity given to the resolutions by the Information Section bolstered the League's prestige as a patron of high idealism. The conference itself realized the inadequacy of its work and recommended in one of its resolutions the desirability of further meetings. Acting under this sanction, the Danish government decided that "moral disarmament" would be furthered if a conference of the chiefs of government press departments and semiofficial agencies were held. The League of Nations approved the idea, with the added suggestion that representatives of independent press associations should also be invited. The agenda stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the "problem of false and tendentious news regarding international affairs of a nature likely to disturb international peace."

The so-called conference of Governmental Press Bureaus and Representatives of the Press convened at Copenhagen on January 11, 1932, with thirty-four government press departments represented, some by executives, others by correspondents, and others by local legation secretaries. The United States State Department was represented by Robert T. Pell, press attaché at the Paris Embassy. Independent press associations represented included

## Mobilizing for Chaos

Havas, Reuters, Telegraphen Union, International News Service, Universal Service, United Press, Central News, and Ritzau's Agency of Denmark. Organization of the conference was guided mainly by Pierre Comert, director of the Information Section of the League.

Animosity between the independent news associations on the one hand and government bureaus and news associations on the other appeared immediately in a dispute over the proposed plan to appoint three resolutions committees, representing respectively the independent press associations, the government press departments, and several national journalistic societies, with the idea that the resolutions adopted by the three committees could be welded into one set of resolutions by a committee appointed by the chair. At the insistence of the independent group, it was finally arranged that the resolutions of each committee would go into the final report separately and be voted separately.

The conference unanimously adopted the expected utterance offered by the committee of independent news associations, on universal freedom for world news. The resolution affirmed that the international press maintains fully its justifiable right to liberty, and that it circulates only news which it believes in good faith to be true; it stated that one of the ways to prevent circulation of inaccurate news regarding government activities is

## The Defense of News; Dikes of Straw

for the government press departments to furnish authentic information rapidly; it asked the chiefs of governmental press departments to transmit with favorable recommendations to their governments the following desires of the conference: (1) closer collaboration between government press departments and press representatives; (2) extension of hours and facilities and improvement of accessibility of government press department representatives; (3) that all accredited press representatives should be accorded equality of treatment by government press departments, both in issuance of news and transmission on governmental lines of communication; (4) that governments should put into execution the resolution regarding censorship in peace time adopted by the 1927 Geneva Press Conference.<sup>2</sup>

These resolutions met with no opposition, since they embodied the classic principles of freedom and had no force behind them except the undependable one of moral suasion. The fight came when a proposal was made to put teeth into the platitudes by approving the establishment of a so-called Tribunal of Honor which would make journalists liable to punishment for libeling a nation just as they are now liable for libeling an individual. The plan for a Tribunal of Honor had been drawn up the previous year by the International Federation of Journalists, an organization

## Mobilizing for Chaos

of twenty-nine journalistic societies including such organizations as the Syndicat National des Journalistes of Paris, the Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse of Berlin, and the National Union of Journalists of London. The headquarters of the Federation is in Paris, and its general secretary, Stephen Valot, is a Frenchman. The Federation had proceeded with its plan to the extent of appointing a president-judge, choosing The Hague as its seat, drawing up rules, and obtaining the nominal adherence of journalistic societies in a number of European countries, although it failed to consult either the International Association of Journalists Accredited to the League of Nations, which had made the original suggestion of a Conseil d'Ordre, or the American news associations.

The Court of Honor for Journalists had been formally inaugurated in the Peace Palace at The Hague before foreign journalists and diplomats on October 12, 1931. Judges of the court were to be chosen from professional journalists, while prominent international jurists were to be asked to serve as president and vice president. Dr. B. C. J. Loder, former president of the Court for International Justice, was appointed the first president. Describing the objects of the court, H. M. Richardson, general secretary of the National Union of Journalists, English member of the International Federation of Journalists, said that civil law pro-



## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

tected citizens from libels published in newspapers and made it possible for them to recover damages, but there was nothing to prevent a newspaper from saying "the nation is a nation of scoundrels, charlatans, lunatics, uncivilized brutes, or whatever other term of opprobrium may come into my mind. There is no law that prohibits such an exhibition of spleen on the part of all the journalists of England or any other country, although the consequences of such indulgence may be unhappiness not only to the nation, but also to all the people in the country from which the vituperation emerged and all other countries in the world." The power and jurisdiction of the court was left in considerable doubt. "I do not think the court will often be called upon to hear a case," Mr. Richardson said. "The mere fact that there is such a code and such a court will be sufficient to make journalists keep to the straight path. But the purpose of the code and the court will be more fully carried out if the national organizations of journalists, in addition to undertaking to expel offending members, undertake also to protect all members who, having been tempted to go wrong, have in accordance with the principles of the international code taken their courage in their hands and declined."<sup>8</sup>

The proposal to indorse the Tribunal of Honor was put forward at the Copenhagen conference by the committee representing international journal-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

istic societies. M. Valot was active in its behalf, and appeared especially desirous of obtaining the adherence of the Americans. The Americans and Constantin Oumansky, director of the Press Bureau of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, abstained from voting on the question of the Tribunal. The Americans pointed out that as the Tribunal could only act upon charges brought by a national journalistic association, and no such body existed in the United States, the idea was not practicable from the American point of view.<sup>4</sup> They also felt that as the Tribunal was already in nominal existence, though it had never functioned, and that as Americans had nothing to do with its establishment or its rules, it were better to abstain from voting than to vote against it. Oumansky looked upon the proposal with suspicion. His point of view during the conference was that press agreements, as a general rule, are merely a corollary of political agreements, and in the past have amounted to discrimination against the press of other countries. The American position in respect to opposition to the Tribunal was set forth in a statement inserted as an annex in the final resolutions of the conference: "We recognize only two duties. One is to our public, which, as has already been pointed out by Mr. Pell, will inevitably punish in its own effective way any professional dere-

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

liction. The other is to operate under the laws of the countries in which we function. We can see no need, so far as we are concerned, for any other agency to deal with matters which already fall within existing jurisdictions."

M. Valot, angered by the American attitude, is reported to have made a bitter speech in which he threatened that the rules might be changed so that the Tribunal could summon anyone, whether or not his country adhered to the Tribunal. If the summoned man failed to appear, he said, the world would draw its own conclusions.<sup>5</sup> The political character of the Tribunal of Honor, however, has remained suspect, and the court has not yet functioned. The Copenhagen conference adjourned without any more tangible accomplishments than the expression of desires and platitudes in the form of conference resolutions.

In the meantime, the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations decided, in connection with the work of the Disarmament Conference, to consult the press regarding the coöperation of the press in the organization of peace, and particularly on the delicate question of the "spread of false information which may threaten to disturb the peace or the good understanding between nations." Replies were received from two international organizations, the International Association of Journal-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

ists Accredited to the League of Nations, and the International Federation of Journalists, and from journalists' organizations in sixteen countries.

Of the replies received, the most comprehensive and lucid was offered by the International Association of Journalists Accredited to the League of Nations, of which Clarence Streit, correspondent of the *New York Times* in Geneva, was at that time president.<sup>9</sup> The report criticized the remedial measures commonly suggested, such as an international Court of Honor and schemes for assuring a right to reply to false news. In regard to an international professional Court of Honor, it was pointed out that no other profession has succeeded in establishing an international Court of Honor, and that journalism is as a matter of fact somewhat behind other professions in establishing national or even municipal means of combating unethical practices. An international professional Court of Honor, moreover, presupposes a code of ethics that is internationally recognized, and such an international code does not at present exist in journalism. The serious question was asked whether a Court of Honor and the right to reply would not actually produce more harm than good, since they would tend to encourage passionate international controversy.

Asserting that the solution of the problem of provocative news is not remedial, but preventive,

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

the report attacked the issue at its central point: the question of financial freedom. The germ of the disease of false news is the fact that the newspaper cannot live on what people will pay directly for the news. A newspaper that can live on circulation revenue alone is the Utopian dream of every journalist. Actually, the economy of newspaper publishing places newspapers under the control of non-journalists, and exposes them to more or less secret pressure from powerful industrial or financial or political or governmental interests. The situation tends to grow steadily worse because the deficit between what a newspaper receives from its readers and the cost of production is increasing. One result, the trend toward amalgamations and chains, reduces the number of independent newspaper units and thereby tends to destroy the wholesome effects of a large number of independent witnesses reporting on news affecting international relations. The layman may conclude that the solution lies in putting the entire cost of the newspaper on the shoulders of the consumer by raising the price. This is impossible. "If a newspaper with a circulation of 100,000 at 2 cents a copy found, by dividing its cost with its circulation, that 2 cents represented only one-seventh of the income it needed per copy, it would not be enough for it to charge 14 cents. If it did, it would be lucky to keep 10,000 readers. Then it would have to raise the

## Mobilizing for Chaos

price to \$1.40 a copy. If it kept 100 readers then it would be still luckier—and it would have to raise the price for them to \$140 a copy.” Even if it were able to keep this last hundred, it would still have missed the goal of the newspaper, the dissemination of accurate news swiftly to the masses. Any general increase in price would tend to decrease the number of independent newspapers, and the general interest is better served if one can buy for ten cents not one newspaper but five.

The solution of the problem, the report asserted, is the extension of the principle of the Press Rate. The correspondents went on record as opposing absolutely anything that would tend to give governments control over the press. “It would be far better to remain where we are than to establish any system which would or might allow a government to bring any more pressure than it already can on a newspaper.” The Press Rate, however, is a form of public subsidy which does not threaten the press with government control. A part of the burden of newspaper production has already been passed on to the Public Treasury in the form of cheap rates for the transmission of news by telegraph and for distribution of newspapers through the mails. The report recommended the consideration of the extension of the principle of the Press Rate to the following: (1) all electrical means of transmitting news, particularly the telephone and tele-

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

graph, cable and wireless rates for long distances; (2) transportation rates, national and international, on newspapers, particularly the air mail; (3) transportation of journalists by every conveyance, land, sea or air, now requiring a ticket; (4) passport, visa, identity card, etc., fees for journalists; (5) transportation rates on newsprint paper, ink, and newspaper printing machinery; (6) custom duties on newsprint paper, ink, and machinery; (7) electric power and light for newspaper offices and plants; (8) direct taxes.

That the proposal to extend the principle of the Press Rate would rouse a fear in the layman that this plan would make the newspaper business too easy and profitable was foreseen by the committee. The report discounted the danger for the following reasons: (1) In no other business is there a stronger natural tendency to put profits back into improving the plant. In cases of venality, any danger of newspapers becoming too rich could be curbed by taxation of net profits above 6 or 8 per cent. (2) Any danger of newspapers becoming too rich would be offset by their tendency to improve their advertising standards as their dependency on individual advertisers decreases. (3) If, even so, newspaper profits should tend to become too high or easy under this plan, this would simply result in encouraging the establishment of more newspapers in each city. This would be a great advantage from

## Mobilizing for Chaos

the standpoint of the public interest. It was also pointed out that the cost to the public would in reality be no more, since we are already indirectly paying the full cost of newspaper production in the form of the cost of other goods bought, in bad and wasteful and corrupt government, in the preparation for and waging of war of all kinds, financial, economic, and murderous. It would be far cheaper to pay directly and openly in taxes. Moreover, it can never be an economy, even for the poorest man, "to let the burglar feed the watchdog." The report also stressed the point that an indispensable element in the principle of the Press Rate is that it is granted to all newspapers without distinction as to their character or policy. Only this element safeguards the press from government control.

This valuable document now rests in the archives of the League of Nations and will probably continue to rest there without further action. Remarkable as it is for the frankness and clarity of its exposé of the fundamental dilemma of modern journalism, which is economic, the solution it proposes runs counter to political tendencies the world over and can only be considered as a Utopian scheme. Revolutionary changes will have to occur in the political philosophies of states before governments will agree to subsidize a large, powerful, and independent press whose primary service will



## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

be to oversee and censor these same governments. The report proposes a real Fourth Estate which would act as another check and balance upon the acts of governments, when in reality the political fashion of the age is in the direction of the regimentation of the national state, with the elimination of the checks and balances of courts, representative legislative bodies, and press by strong political masters. The press everywhere is on the defensive to preserve those few privileges which it already possesses, and it is contrary to political realism to believe that any government would suddenly make a turn-about and bestow upon the press the double gift of financial support and irresponsible liberty. Moreover, the layman will not be easily persuaded that newspaper proprietors deserve public aid. Their reputation for commercial acumen is too good, and the disparity between the salaries paid to reporters and the profits of the owners is too great, to awaken the sympathy of the layman. The odor of Big Business attached to the newspaper industry prevents the public from feeling the urge to give public support for public service as in the case of charities or the public school system.

Other replies to the request of the League Council for remedies for the evil of false news showed much difference of opinion. The Empire Press Union denied that the problem existed in the British

## Mobilizing for Chaos

Empire. The International Federation of Journalists found the solution in its Court of Honor, while the Foreign Press Association in Switzerland stressed the impotence of a Court of Honor and rebuked the International Federation for not inviting the International Association of Journalists Accredited to the League of Nations, which initiated the idea of a Conseil de l'Ordre des Journalistes, to participate in the constitution of the court. The Australian Journalists' Association proposed representations to universities and schools of journalism for the dissemination of knowledge of the effects of news upon public opinion and world crises. Several organizations proposed the development of a world news bureau, preferably under League auspices. Italy bluntly stated that the only two ways of preventing the spread of false news, state monopoly of international news or preventive censorship, both destroyed freedom of the press, and frankly endorsed its own dictatorial policies: "The only way to obtain practical results is that adopted in Italy, where journalistic work is intrusted under suitable laws to persons of recognized honesty, education, and sense of responsibility. Special lists (*albi*) are prepared, and, if any person fails in his difficult duty, his name is struck off the list and he may not continue to exercise a profession for which he has shown himself to be morally unfitted or without the necessary politi-

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

cal sense and responsibility. In other words, the adventurer and the ignoramus must not be allowed to engage in the profession of journalism merely out of regard for the fetish of liberty."

The most recent International Press Conference under League auspices was held at Madrid in November, 1933. The chief subject of the conference was the prevention of the dissemination of false news, and the discussions, in general, continued the controversies of the Copenhagen conference of the previous year, with the same groups opposing one another. Stephen Valot, of the International Federation of Journalists, again vigorously defended the proposed "Court of Honor," while the Americans, including James I. Miller of the United Press and Robert T. Pell, supported by a Dutch editor, as vigorously attacked it. A resolution declaring for the principle of a Court of Honor for journalists was finally passed, but an American exception was noted, and M. Valot himself admitted that he did not have much hope of the court being established because of American opposition. A somewhat similar scheme for controlling correspondents appeared in the form of a resolution originally suggested by Germany and backed at Madrid by the French and Poles which would require correspondents to secure permits to work from an International Association of Journalists. This proposal was viewed by the Americans as an

## Mobilizing for 'Chaos

attempt to place correspondents at the mercy of Foreign Offices of Europe and was successfully opposed. Instead of a permit subject to cancellation for disciplinary reasons, the conference urged the adoption of an international identity card visaed by newspaper or news agency directors. The position of the French press during these controversies appeared somewhat ambiguous. Delegates were startled by a statement issued by French delegates to the effect that in recent weeks France had abandoned as ineffective the control of the press which she had long maintained. At another time, when M. Rosenberg, the Soviet representative, made a motion that a declaration against the practice of subsidization of newspapers by munitions plants be put into the resolutions, the French delegates, aided by the delegates of the Little Entente, took alarm and succeeded in having the motion killed. One French delegate stated squarely that his nation would not accept any proposals if this were included.<sup>8</sup>

Another long fight developed over a resolution introduced by Robert T. Pell which urged that the conference attempt to seek a preventive solution for the problem of false news by following the suggestion of the Streit report to the League of Nations and appoint a fact-finding commission to investigate technical and financial ways of remedying the false news problem. The resolution was

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

interpreted to mean that a committee of experts would investigate the financial set-up of newspapers and news agencies with the idea of exposing any factors of ownership or subsidy which might influence reports. After a sharp struggle, in which the Soviet representative, Rosenberg, supported Pell, and Stephen Valot offered the most articulate opposition, the resolution was passed. It was presumed that the committee to be appointed would report at the next international press conference.

The Pell resolution was looked upon by its author as a forward step, since it approached the problem of false news from the angle of prevention and the greatest freedom of the press instead of from the angle of repression and punishment. The American news agencies professed to be highly pleased with the resolution because they had nothing to conceal from investigators and were certain that an inquiry would show widespread subsidization of national press agencies abroad with money and special privilege. On the other hand, grave doubt is felt that the committee will ever be appointed, and, if it is appointed, that it will ever be allowed to proceed very far in its investigations. It is extremely improbable that either great newspapers or national news agencies or governments will allow an unofficial group of journalists to examine the sources of revenue of newspapers and news agencies or the secret budgetary appropria-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

tions of governments for propaganda purposes. Unless Wolffs, Havas, Stefani, and Tass open their books to the journalists, which is scarcely conceivable, it is apparent that the Madrid conference produced no more practicable results than the conferences at Copenhagen and Geneva. The most that can be said for it is that it reaffirmed some basic principles of freedom, and stemmed for another interval the pressure of forces seeking to subject the correspondent to greater control by non-journalistic interests.

Turning from the League of Nations to national governments, agreements between states regarding the control and protection of news have frequently been made independent of League auspices, but these agreements have been in general merely corollaries of political agreements. Promises to respect the correspondents of a friendly power and to prevent the domestic press from publishing matter injurious to the co-signer of a treaty are evidence of political strategy for national ends, and are no more indicative of an honest desire to establish universal freedom of communication than a "most favored nation" tariff treaty is indicative of a desire for international free trade. Such agreements have therefore rarely lasted longer than the political alliances of which they are a part. Moreover, they represent an extreme form of political

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

control of the press, since the press is compelled by the government to follow news policies which the press may not desire. Treaties with Russia sometimes provide that the Soviet desist from the dissemination of propaganda in the treaty country. The foreign news of a dictatorship such as Italy at all times reflects the political loves and hates of the central government. In the western hemisphere, the Pan American Union has proposed that in the event of insurrection or civil war in a state, the governments of the several neighboring states obligate themselves to prevent their telegraphic or telephonic, radiotelegraphic or radiotelephonic stations from being used for the purpose of subversive action.<sup>9</sup> Whatever their special character, agreements between governments on news relations virtually always mean government interference with the press for nationalistic ends. A government cannot promise to make its press behave without having that press completely under control.

A common device employed by governments these days to prevent the spread of what they believe to be "false news" is the crude method of embargo. Seizure of Swiss newspapers by German officials after they have crossed the frontier has become almost a daily occurrence, and was recently the cause of a diplomatic incident in which the government of Switzerland threatened to seize German papers in retaliation if the practice were not

## Mobilizing for Chaos

stopped. Austria has officially banned a hundred foreign newspapers and periodicals. In most dictator countries, the clamping down of censorship has created a heavy demand for foreign newspapers. Faced with a situation in which domestic newspaper circulations are falling off and foreign newspaper circulations are increasing, officials are forced to ban foreign papers to guard the public mind against foreign "impurities." Diplomatic representations failing, foreign newspapers will have to publish a purified "export" edition or lose a part of their circulation.

Another governmental method of combating false news is buying into newspaper properties abroad. Germany is said to be financially interested in newspapers in Danzig, the Saar, and the Baltic countries. Italy is reputed to have bought up newspapers in Austria and Switzerland.<sup>10</sup>

Often individual governments are called upon to defend the rights and privileges of their nationals engaged in journalistic work abroad. Unfortunately, an appeal to an embassy or consulate does not always result in the necessary protection. George Seldes, in *You Can't Print That*, has noted the tendency of American diplomatic representatives to toady to the ruling classes of the country in which they are stationed. The social aspirations of the average diplomat make him reluctant to become involved in an embarrassing defense of a fool-



## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

ish newspaperman whose indiscretions have embroiled him in trouble with the authorities. Even when representations are made, as in the case of Edgar Ansel Mowrer in Berlin, and in the cases of several correspondents expelled from Italy, no effective pressure can be brought to bear upon the foreign government. The American government, or any government, has neither grounds nor desire for drastic or forceful protest against a government which ordinarily, in persecuting a correspondent, is only carrying out its domestic laws. When the law and current practice is clearly on the side of the correspondent, the foreign government may simply say that it can no longer guarantee the personal safety of the correspondent, as the German government did in the Mowrer case. Usually diplomatic representatives are primarily concerned with avoiding frictions of any kind between the home and foreign governments and will therefore give the correspondent somewhat less than justice. An instance of this occurred recently in Germany when Noel Panter, London *Daily Telegraph* correspondent previously expelled from Germany, returned to Germany upon official information that he was not actually barred and could return if he wished. Greeted as a "spy" by Nazi press officials, Panter went to see the British Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps, who flew into a rage and accused him of trying to create trouble between

## Mobilizing for Chaos

two friendly nations. Panter was ordered to leave Germany at once, and complied.<sup>11</sup>

The work of the two leading international associations of journalists, the International Association of Journalists Accredited to the League of Nations, and the International Federation of Journalists, has been discussed in connection with the League of Nations. Several other international organizations have been formed from time to time, but it cannot be said that their efforts have produced any appreciable change in the conditions of world news coverage. The most prominent of the organizations not associated with the League is probably the so-called Press Congress of the World, sponsored by the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri for the purpose of bringing journalists from all parts of the world together to discuss mutual problems. Periodic meetings have been held at which the delegates have passed the usual resolutions urging freedom and accuracy and deploring the encroachment of government upon news channels, but the fourth and most recent meeting, held at Mexico City in August of 1931, was almost disrupted by violent political brawls, with "imperialistic" United States and Great Britain as the chief targets.<sup>12</sup> The tendency of the Press Congress is to disintegrate into regional associations, of which two, a Pan-Pacific Federation, with headquarters in Hono-

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

lulu, and a Press Federation of America, with headquarters in Mexico City, have been announced as organized. The World Congress in Mexico City was largely dominated by Latin American delegates. The Congress has not met since 1931, and it is doubtful whether political antagonisms within the world press itself will permit any further voluntary collaboration of journalists.

Another type of organization which represents international collaboration is the local society of correspondents located in a foreign capital or country. Organizations such as the Anglo-American Press Association in Vienna, the Anglo-American Press Club in Paris and the Verein der Ausländischen Presse zu Berlin are examples of this type. These organizations are sometimes effective in securing more favorable conditions for news coverage in foreign capitals, but their influence is chiefly local, and they are without authority or power to remedy major abuses.

National press associations in nearly all countries have at one time or another issued classic utterances on the freedom of the press and lamented the increasing governmental interference with news channels. These efforts may have the desirable result of building up a public opinion favorable to freedom of international intercourse and thus check a too rapid growth of national

## Mobilizing for Chaos .

domination of communications, but a glance at world conditions today would seem to lead to the inevitable conclusion that the efforts have been somewhat vain. The national press associations often expose themselves to the suspicion that they are not acting entirely from unselfish motives. The concept of absolute freedom of the press is much too abstract to mean anything to the average man, whether journalist or layman. National press associations using the term are apt to refer to a condition which would allow them the utmost liberty to increase national and their own commercial power to the disadvantage of foreign rivals or the public. Freedom of the press, like liberty and brotherly love, is a magic phrase which never fails to awaken a sentimental response, and it is therefore employed a great deal by sentimentalists, after-dinner speakers, demagogues and special pleaders for ulterior causes. Because of its universal appeal, it is used as a rallying banner for a highly diversified collection of causes, some of them socially minded and altruistic and others base and mercenary. Meanwhile, the gap between the lofty idealism of the term and political realities has constantly widened.

In America, the leading publishers' association, the American Newspaper Publishers Association, and the leading editors' association, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, have both been ex-

## The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw

tremely vocal in defending the principle of freedom and denouncing foreign governments, press associations, and newspapers for interference with the stream of world news. Both associations have committees intrusted with the task of exposing each new attempt to restrict press liberties. Colonel Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the *Chicago Tribune* and chairman of the Freedom of the Press Committee of the A.N.P.A., has become the leading apostle of freedom for the domestic press, and Carl W. Ackerman, dean of the Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia University, is constantly reminding publishers and editors of the dangers of foreign censorship to the American press. The sincerity of these gentlemen is not in question, but the fact remains that the reputation of the American Newspaper Publishers Association in social policies where profits are involved is not good, as may be seen in its hostile attitude toward the Tugwell bill to regulate advertising, the Wagner bill to establish a national labor board, and its antagonism to government measures affecting mechanical, editorial, and carrier-boy labor. The primary loyalties of American publishers, like foreign publishers, are to their national and commercial interests and not to abstract ideals of internationalism, justice, and truth. The publishers have undoubtedly been effective in stiffening the resistance of the American government, and especially the State Depart-

## Mobilizing for Chaos

ment, to measures disadvantageous to the American press. This is, however, a nationalistic activity which has helped to sharpen nationalistic conflict in the world field. No lasting progress can be made until American newspaper interests, as well as foreign newspaper interests, examine their own financial organization in the light of a social altruism which embraces the world community. There is no likelihood that this will ever be done.

Non-journalistic organizations and individuals, such as peace societies, legal societies, and students of international affairs, have pointed out the dangers of present tendencies. There is little evidence for believing, however, that the warning that the increasing control of intelligence by nationalistic interests is destroying human liberty and drawing humanity into another maelstrom of war has much popular appeal. Because of propaganda and the insidious atmosphere cultivated by the regimentation of national populations and the sharpening of nationalistic rivalries, the average man feels himself more than ever the creature of his country and that his destiny is bound up with the success or failure of the nation. This is not an atmosphere that breeds a sense of international responsibility or that builds up a public opinion sufficiently strong to protect the international channels of communication. The protesters mentioned in this chapter, from the

## **The Defense of News: Dikes of Straw**

**League of Nations down to the lonesome Jeremiah hailing an approaching catastrophe, are better than nothing, but they seem now to be standing helpless against the approaching tide.**

## Propaganda on All Fronts

THE limits of this inquiry proscribe a discussion of nationalism and propaganda not directly related to rapid communications and the press. A brief reminder must be given, however, of another integral part of the pattern of nationalism in our day—the extension of nationalistic propaganda activities by all the known means of human intercommunication. The control of electrical transmission and news lies at the core of the problem, but there are numbers of accessory methods of propaganda which are being used increasingly by nations as a part of a continuous peacetime crusade to influence world opinion. The myriad devices used in an effort to enlist world sympathy for a national point of view are striking compliments to the prestige of public opinion. In the nationalistic world of today, writers, speakers, journalists, educational organizations, cultural societies, and travelers must be mobilized under the guidance of professional propagandists to further national honor and success.

*Kulturpolitik* is old, but the adoption of the strategy of cultural propaganda by virtually every nation, the growing professionalization of propagandists, and the technical skill of their work are



## Propaganda on All Fronts

characteristic of the times. The extension of literacy and the opening up of new and more rapid means of communication have placed at the service of diplomacy a new weapon for the accomplishment of both aggressive and defensive national objectives. The lesson of scientific propaganda was learned in the World War and from the example of advertising and promotional exploits of private business. The borrowing of the techniques of military intelligence departments and advertising and publicity men for peacetime propaganda of national governments has resulted in an enormous increase in the number of points of contact with propaganda in the life of the average individual and has tended to make him the victim of forces which he does not understand.

National propaganda is conducted either directly by governments through official or semiofficial agencies, or by private organizations. As the word is commonly used in America, propaganda connotes deceit or disguise in motives or source, and these elements of dishonesty are especially present in nationalistic propaganda. Propaganda generally passes under the name of education. The organizations which disseminate it are often known as philanthropic or educational institutions, or societies devoted to the furtherance of international understanding and good will. In order to reach the large publics for which it is intended, it is

## Mobilizing for Chaos

desirable that national propaganda appear under auspices which do not arouse antagonism or suspicion. For this reason, propaganda is usually disseminated by alien organizations with interests oriented toward the country for which the propaganda is intended, or, still better, through native organizations which have no apparent tie with the foreign government from which the propaganda issues.

Foreign propaganda is found in every country, but its quantity and effectiveness differ according to local conditions. In general it can be said that propaganda is not highly successful or much employed between countries which have crystallized their political relations, as is the case between France and Germany, where propaganda, except when it is a propaganda of intimidation or provocation, is seldom effective against a deep-rooted heritage of hatred and fear, or as in the case of Canada and the United States, where a tradition of harmony and mutual interest has prevented propaganda from assuming dangerous proportions. On the other hand, countries whose political and cultural allegiances have not yet fully crystallized, and in which a considerable body of public opinion may be favorably influenced, are targets for vigorous foreign propaganda. Such places are the Saar, disputed by France and Germany; the Baltic countries and the Little Entente, bombarded by French,

## Propaganda on All Fronts

German, and Russian propaganda; and the great Anglo-Saxon countries, Great Britain and the United States, which have traditionally sought to preserve a tradition of political and cultural neutrality.

The sources of foreign propaganda in America are so numerous that it would be futile to attempt in this place more than a suggestive list of some of the more obvious points of infiltration of alien ideas and points of view. The following brief survey may serve, however, to call attention to some of the typical methods used by foreign nations to spread alien ideas outside of strictly journalistic channels:

France: The Quai d'Orsay compliments itself on its propaganda in this fashion: "Far from being directed toward compact groups of nationals, as the German and Italian sections for Culture Abroad, the French section endeavors with complete disinterestedness to reach the élite desirous of assimilating treasures of new ideas, liberal aspirations, and refined traditions; which is anxious to acquire that elegance of expression and that flower of humanism represented by our literature, our art, and our science."<sup>1</sup>

The methods of the French are best described in their own words. Reporting on the Foreign Affairs budget for 1933, Deputy Adrien Dariac had the

## Mobilizing for Chaos

following to say about adaptations of propaganda in the United States: "All of the unpleasant taste which we give to the United States is due, in effect, to the lack of assets of our propaganda. Anti-French propaganda, dating from November 12, 1918, had a clear field, and thus the magnificent achievements which were ours at the end of the war were obscured. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent by Germany. Experience has proved that this investment has cost us more than a billion. . . . In this respect, the Americans have made no effort to inform themselves; it is necessary to go to them and place under their eyes the simple truths, the marks of common sense. . . . It is nonsense to address ourselves to public officers, who are prisoners of the electorate. . . . The means to employ are the motion-picture, the radio, the lecture-platform, magazines, and the press. . . . The puerile and striking designs of advertising are the most efficacious. No literature can be employed. It is necessary to avoid all public effort; and above all not to judge the United States by New York, a cosmopolitan city, or by Washington, the diplomatic and political center. One finds the best propagandists among members of the Association of Former Liaison Officers with the American Army; it is composed of French Americanophiles and American Francophiles. . . . There are in all cities of the United States French and friends of France.

## Propaganda on All Fronts

It is well first of all to obtain an exact list and to centralize the data we can get regarding them, then to choose those who can have an influence in this or that quarter. . . . It will not be excessive to publish every fortnight in newspapers the arguments establishing the responsibility of Germany in the World War; the retirement of French troops ten kilometers from the frontiers; . . . and also to explain that the 82 billions of gold in the Bank of France do not belong to the French government. . . . As missionaries, neither politicians, government employees, nor *littérateurs* count; only business men know the mentality of the American public. . . . It may be judicious to employ for our propaganda certain commercial organizations long known and established in the United States. Italy has understood very well that one of her best agencies of propaganda has been the Italian Steamship Line. Italy generously subsidizes its advertising budget. . . . Can we not similarly utilize the vast organization of the French Line . . . ?”<sup>2</sup>

The French Embassy and Consulates are sources of French influence, as are such societies as the France-America Society and the Federation of French Alliances. A Maison Française was opened recently at Rockefeller Center with ceremonies dedicated to the memory of Lafayette, symbol of Franco-American unity. France encourages American students and teachers to go to France to

## Mobilizing for Chaos

study, and provides them with an Alliance Française, a Cité Universitaire, and special cultural courses in French universities designed for foreigners. The Strassburger Foundation and similar agencies strive constantly for Franco-American unity by means of publications, prizes, scholarships, and lectures.

French propaganda has profited considerably by the fact that French interests have coincided to a degree with the aims of American peace and international societies, especially in connection with French support of the League of Nations. French ideas have therefore been given wide publicity by American peace societies without any conscious intention of these societies to indulge in nationalistic propaganda. Pierre de Lanux, head of the Paris Office of the League of Nations, distributes to influential Americans a mimeographed publication called "The French Say," a weekly survey of French newspaper opinion prepared ostensibly as an aid to international understanding. French views have also appeared largely in the publications and activities of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Germany: Germany has outstripped France in the number and variety of its propaganda contacts with America. In addition to the usual diplomatic and consular channels, there are a large number of

## Propaganda on All Fronts

organizations and individuals engaged in building up German prestige in America. The excesses of the Nazi-inspired Friends of the New Germany have made it the subject of a current Congressional investigation. There is also the Steuben Society; the Carl Schurz Foundation, which promotes the spread of German culture in the United States; and the Oberlaender Trust, financed by a gift of \$1,000,000 from a German-American industrialist, which subsidizes the sending of influential Americans to Germany. Germany has lately shown greater enterprise than France in promoting "tourism" as a political aid. Dr. Goebbels inaugurated a campaign to attract more tourists to Germany with the frankly avowed purpose of propagandizing Nazi Germany and the "cause of Germanism." The German Tourist Information Office in New York is a distributing center for literature favorable to Germany. The Terramare Office and other publishing houses in Berlin, and the so-called Fichte Bund in Hamburg turn out mass quantities of propaganda literature in German and English for distribution in America. The distribution of *Communism in Germany*, a Nazi publication, was sponsored in America by such well-known red-baiters as Ralph M. Easley and Hamilton Fish. Dr. Otto Vollbehr, former owner of the famous Vollbehr collection of incunabula, periodically sends out from his Washington office pro-German

## Mobilizing for Chaos

memoranda to publicists, educators, and others having positions of influence. The encouragement of study in German universities is in the hands of the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, which looks after students and teachers in Germany besides putting out a number of propaganda publications in German and English. One of them, *Hochschule und Ausland*, avows itself a monthly publication for *Kulturpolitik*.

If the inquiry embraces other countries the list of propaganda sources could be extended indefinitely. There is the British Library of Information in New York, the Japan Tourist Bureau, the China Society, the Friends of the Soviet Union, the Hungarian Academic Bureau for International Relations, the Society of Friends of Rumania, the Sons of Italy, the China Institute, and the Lithuanian Alliance of North America. The field of national propaganda has attracted professional American publicity men. Edward L. Bernays looked after the public relations of Latvia, and Herbert S. Houston has recently announced himself as a Counsel on International Relations, with a Fifth Avenue address. A Congressional committee investigating Nazi propaganda in the United States in July, 1934, revealed that Ivy Lee, public relations counsel for the Rockefellers and the Pennsylvania Railroad, is being paid \$25,000 a year by German



## Propaganda on All Fronts

interests to "advise" on German-American relations, while his son, James Wideman Lee II, is being paid \$33,000 a year to handle the Berlin end of the business. Carl Byoir, New York publicity man who handled Cuban publicity for Machado and more recently was paid a large sum of money for handling Nazi propaganda in the United States, is also a reserve officer in the army intelligence corps and will, in the event of war, handle with equal facility propaganda for the United States.

There have been few proposals for disarmament in the field of propaganda. The only practical defense is exposure and counter-attack. The newspapers should, if they wish to live up to their professed ideals and functions, take the lead in bringing to light the propaganda activities of foreign governments. Unfortunately, the exposure of foreign propaganda as currently practiced is generally a patriotic exercise the purpose of which is not to arrive at a true perspective on foreign claims but rather to preach a sermon on the danger of alien ideas and the glories of 100 per cent Americanism. The Congressional investigations into Nazi propaganda were motivated by a desire to show the danger of Naziism to good old American institutions and to rally German-Americans and Fascistically inclined radicals to the stars and stripes. Likewise, the unmasking of Soviet propaganda in the United

## Mobilizing for Chaos

States has been conducted chiefly by the super-patriotic societies such as the Key Men of America, the D.A.R., and the American Legion.

An honest difference of opinion on foreign propaganda exists in the United States between the advocates of 100 per cent Americanism and those who champion a broader international outlook. Many of the latter deny that information inspired abroad is always propaganda, but may be an honest effort to explain, frankly and without deceit, the point of view of the foreign nation. The greater the interpenetration of such matter, the better informed will be the individual and the broader his international perspective. The intelligence acquired by wide experience will provide its own defense against the excesses of distortion. Unfortunately for this argument, the average person is a creature of emotion and prejudice, and it is doubtful whether he has a sense of discrimination sufficient to cope with the complex flood of information and propaganda to which he is exposed. If he depends upon his leaders, the politicians, the business men and journalists, for a critical winnowing of the numerous appeals to his emotions and intellect, then, politicians and business men and journalists being what they are, we return to the point from which we started—confronting the growing menace of propaganda with its attendant sharpening of national frictions.

## Conclusion: Toward a New Dark Ages?

THE menace is clearly defined. Human ingenuity has created a web of communication systems and a technique for news dissemination which, if granted freedom from political and economic restraints, could be of remarkable usefulness in supplying the world with a full and rapidly produced record of events and opinions in all fields of human activity, and thus serve as a valuable aid in any effort to secure universal peace and understanding. At the very time when the machinery of record and intercommunication has reached its highest state of development, and its potentialities of social usefulness have become most clearly recognized, it has fallen under the influence of forces which are diverting it to mercenary and selfish ends. The elaborate network of physical equipment for communications, including telegraph, telephone, cable, and radio, has become the pawn of commercial and political rivalry. The machinery for the gathering and dissemination of information, embracing the great press associations, the army of professional reporters and interpreters, and the press, has likewise fallen under the influence of forces which possess

## Mobilizing for Chaos

no universal social consciousness comparable to the size and universality of the organization for reportage.

The villain in the drama of communications is the present condition of society itself, and especially the political and economic ideas which rule modern society. These political and economic ideas find their culminating expression in the doctrine of nationalism, a doctrine which has made of the world a patchwork of militant and jealous states, each of which demands from its subjects the full measure of devotion and postulates that no loyalty to creed, party, family, self, or even to God, is higher than loyalty to nation. Nationalism is an extremely complex force which gratifies the will-to-power through commerce, politics, patriotism and any other channels through which the activity of man can be controlled. It is this complex force which is sovereign in the field of communications, and as long as nationalism remains the dominant factor in political life, the interchange of information will remain subject to the whims of nationalistic expediency.

The causes for the sudden intensification of the menace of nationalism in the field of communications in modern times are, broadly, two: The rapid rise of an extremely narrow, self-contained, and regimented nationalism; and the increasing attention given to communication as one of the greatest,

## Conclusion

if not the greatest, aid in the accomplishment of national ends. Nations have seized upon communication as a prime instrument of social control under modern conditions. They are assuring themselves of the control of transmission facilities and of news, as well as mobilizing accessory forms of propaganda, with the purposes of forging an obedient and patriotic mentality in the population, and of spreading advantageous propaganda outside of the state as an instrument of national policy.

If the tendencies cited in the preceding sections continue, it is not improbable that the government monopoly on information at home and the strict embargo against matter coming from foreign monopolies on information will produce a new dark ages, in which national barriers will prevent the existence of an informed world public, and benighted national populations will be the slaves of any propaganda with which their political masters wish to bind them. If world experience means anything, it has shown that this stifling of the free exchange of ideas and opinions by censorship and propaganda almost invariably leads to catastrophe in the form of war or insurrection.

The United States has so far resisted the tendencies which have already produced an intellectual medievalism in certain European countries. In comparison with dictatorships, the United States is relatively free from the nationalistic control of its

## Mobilizing for Chaos

intellectual life. Government influence on communications exists, but its force is not excessive. American press associations still lead in the degree of freedom of their reports from governmental influence. The American press retains considerable liberty and zealously attacks any suspected encroachments upon it. The kinds of propaganda launched at the American people remain so numerous and diversified that it cannot yet be said that the propaganda of nationalism enjoys a monopoly. Signs of danger, however, have already appeared. The dependence of freedom of communications upon political and economic organization means that concentration and regimentation in political and economic life will be followed inevitably by similar developments in the field of communications. The process has already begun to operate in the field of physical equipment for communications with the appointment of a Federal Communications Commission and the proposal of consolidation under government regulation. This characteristic New Deal policy is not itself likely to impair the freedom of the press, but it is symptomatic of profound changes in political organization which eventually may exert a very strong regulatory influence upon the propagation of information. The American press is making itself increasingly vulnerable to some form of control by its growing dependence upon advertising subsidy

## Conclusion

and the tendency toward concentration and monopoly in the ownership of newspaper properties. The restriction of freedom in America is not likely to come about through the dramatic decrees of a dictatorial *régime* but rather through a slow and not clearly perceptible evolution in the factors of financial control. The public utility character of the press is well recognized. With government regulation and supervision extending beyond public utilities to all kinds of businesses and services, it is increasingly difficult for newspapers to find logical reasons why they should be exempt.

One would like to find a ray of hope. If the social ideal is liberty and knowledge, we know that the public welfare can best be served by a multiplicity of news sources and a multiplicity of organs of opinion. A practical program, then, would be one which would strive to protect minority opinion from all forms of restraint, and at the same time would attempt to check the tendency to pyramid news services and newspapers into financial giants which cut down competition and are susceptible to non-journalistic control. Such a program, however, might mean the end of the big, comprehensive newspapers now enjoyed in America.

We are confronted by the truism that democratic governments, such as those of the United States, England, and France, guarantee greater protection to the free flow of human intelligence

## Mobilizing for Chaos

than dictatorships such as Russia, Germany, and Italy. In an age when the democratic theory of government is being subjected to attack even in countries which have cherished it most devotedly, it is well to remember that one of the first victims of dictatorship is freedom of speech. If public opinion persists in abandoning its democratic theories for the totalitarian state, there is nothing to be done but to accept the inevitable and gird for a warfare between nations which will be made inescapable by the enchainment of human intelligence through propaganda.



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# Mobilizing for Chaos

- British Broadcasting Corporation, 92, 107  
British Marconi, 40, 45, 46, 47  
British Official Wireless, 104  
British Post Office, 48  
Brownrigg, Sir D., 29  
Bullard, Admiral, 45, 46  
*Bulletin of the Union Mondiale de la Femme pour la Concorde Internationale*, 167  
Byoir, Carl, 158, 207
- Cables, 21-37; Great Britain, 21, 22; United States, 23, 36; Germany, 22; seizure of German cables, 24; France, 22; in World War, 23-27; international agreements, 27-29, 218; disposition of German cables, 32-35; Japan, 34, 35, 36, 83; statistics, 23, 37; rates, 78-81  
Cables and Wireless, Ltd., 48, 50  
Canadian Radio League, 104  
Carl Schurz Foundation, 205  
Carlton, Newcomb B., 53  
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 204  
Castle, William R., Jr., 71  
Censorship, of cables, 25-30, 159; of mails, 31, 149; of telegraph, 61-69; of radio, 89-90 (*see also* Radio, under names of countries); of foreign correspondents, 147; in Germany, 147-150; of telephone, 148; in Italy, 151-153; in Soviet Union, 153-154; in France, 154-155; in Spain, 155; survey of censorship in Europe, 155-156; in Latin America, 156-158; in China, 158-159; in Japan, 159-160; international resolutions against, 173; international treaties affecting, 176, 188-189; in United States, 211-213  
Central News, 172  
*Chicago Daily News*, 148  
*Chicago Tribune*, 195  
Chile, control of news, 157  
China, 62, 64; control of press and correspondents in China, 158-159  
Cité Universitaire, 204  
Code language, 78  
Comert, Pierre, 119, 155, 172  
Communications, electrical, 19-21  
Conference of Governmental Press Bureaus and Representatives of the Press, Copenhagen, 1932, 171-177

# Index

- Conference of Press Experts, Geneva, 1927, 73, 170-171, 173  
*Conseil d'Ordre. See* Tribunal of Honor  
Cooper, Kent, 121, 128  
Corey, George H., 157  
Correspondents, foreign, 65-67, 68, 75, 76, 111; patriotism of, 132; influences affecting, 137-167; influence of employing newspapers, 137-144; control by terrorism, 144-145; environmental pressures, 145-167; relations with government news sources, 145; relations with foreign press, 146; cultural influences, 146; censorship, 147; in Germany, 147-150; in Italy, 151-153; in Soviet Union, 153-154; in France, 154-155; in Spain, 155; in the Balkans, 155; in Latin America, 156-158; in China, 158, 159; in Japan, 159-160; in Geneva (League of Nations), 160-167; proposal to license, 185-186; diplomatic protection of, 190-192; international organizations, 192-193. *See also* League of Nations  
Crusades, the, 112  
Cuba, propaganda activity, 158  
Czechoslovakia, 64  
  
Dariac, Adrien, 120, 201-203  
Dempo-Tsushin Sha (Den-Tsuu), 160  
*Der Angriff*, 98  
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, 206  
Deutsches Nachrichten Büro, 117  
Dill, Senator Clarence C., 55  
Diplomatic protection of foreign correspondents, 190-192  
*Disarmament*, 167  
Disarmament Conference, 162, 164-165, 177  
"Dora," 29  
Doumergue, Gaston, 101  
  
Easley, Ralph M., 205  
Eiffel Tower radio station, 87, 91  
Empire Press Union, 184  
  
Federal Communications Commission, 55, 80, 81, 86, 130, 212  
Federal Radio Commission, 49, 86  
Federation of French Alliances, 203  
Fichte Bund, 205  
Fish, Hamilton, 205  
Foreign Press Association, Switzerland, 184

# Mobilizing for Chaos

- France, cables, 22 ; radio, 40, 91 ; press associations, 117-124 ; control of press and correspondents in France, 154-155 ; non-journalistic propaganda, 201-204  
France-America Society, 203  
Franco-Prussian War, 112  
Freedom of the Press, concept of, 69-70 ; international resolutions affirming, 172-173 ; popularity of appeal, 194  
French Line, 203  
French Revolution, 5, 6, 7  
Friends of the New Germany, 205  
  
General Electric Company, 45-46  
German Tourist Information Office, 205  
Germany, 1 ; cables, 22 ; seizure of cables in World War, 24 ; disposition of cables, 32-35 ; radio, 39-40, 87, 91-92, 96-100, 105 ; press associations, 116-117 ; control of German correspondents abroad, 145 ; censorship of press and foreign correspondents in Germany, 147-150 ; financial interest in foreign newspapers, 190 ; non-journalistic propaganda, 204-206  
Gibbons, Floyd, 141  
Goebbels, Dr. Paul Joseph, 1, 15, 98, 99, 100, 104, 150, 205  
Goering, General Hermann, 150  
Great Britain, cables, 21-22 ; radio, 40, 47-48, 92 ; press associations, 124-126  
  
Habicht, Theodor, 103  
Hague Convention, 1907, 28, 31  
Harbord, General J. G., 50, 51, 94  
Hearst, William Randolph, 25-26, 142-143, 154, 166  
Hitler, Adolph, 96, 97, 100  
Hoover, Herbert, 51, 71, 144  
Houston, Herbert S., 206  
  
Identity cards for journalists, proposed, 186  
Imperial and International Communications Company, Ltd., 48  
Imperial Wireless and Cable Conference, 1927-1928, 48  
Imperialism, 12, 13  
Industrial Revolution, 7, 9, 11, 19  
International Association of Journalists, proposed, 185  
International Federation of Journalists, 173, 174, 178, 184, 185, 192

# Index

- International News Service, 25-26, 70, 118, 127, 134, 136-137, 172  
International organizations of journalists, 192-193  
International Press Conference, Madrid, 1933, 185-188  
International Telecommunication Convention, Madrid, 1932, 60-84; Cairo, 1937, 81, 82  
International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, 36, 50, 53, 216-217  
Interstate Commerce Commission, 49, 86  
Irredentism, 13, 14  
Italian steamship line, 203  
Italy, radio, 91; press associations, 116; control of Italian correspondents abroad, 145; censorship of press and foreign correspondents in Italy, 151-153; financial interest in foreign newspapers, 190  
"Jamming" radio broadcasts, 103  
Japan, cables, 23, 34-36, 83; cable censorship proposal, 63, 64; radio, 82; control of press and foreign correspondents in Japan, 159-160  
Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 116  
Jews, 16  
Johnson, Albin E., 152  
Yugoslavia, 90, 155  
Kauffman, Reginald Wright, 166  
KDKA, 88  
Kellogg, Senator, 130  
Keynes, J. M., 101  
Knickerbocker, H. R., 143  
*Kulturpolitik*, 112, 199  
Kuo Min, 158  
Lanux, Pierre de, 204  
League of Nations, 3, 16, 73, 77; Communications and Transit Section, 73; Opium Advisory Committee, 73, 77; radio, 93; press relations, 160-167; efforts to combat false news, 170-188  
Lee, Ivy, 206  
Lee, James Wideman, II, 207  
Lemercier, Camille, 122  
Libel, of nations, 173, 175  
Loder, Dr. B. C. J., 174  
London *Daily Telegraph*, 191

# Mobilizing for Chaos

London *Evening Star*, 144

London *Times*, 125, 157

Machado, President, 157-158

McCormick, Colonel Robert R., 195

Madrid, International Telecommunication Convention, 1932, 60;

International Press Conference, 1933, 185-188

Maison Française, 203

Marconi, 39

Miller, James I., 185

Mowrer, Edgar Ansel, 148, 191

National press associations, 193-196

National Union of Journalists, London, 174

Nationalism, 2 ff.; and news, 109, 110, 210-211

Nauen, German radio station, 39, 43, 87

New Deal policies, 53, 212

News, importance of, 108; relation to communication systems, 109; and nationalism, 109-110; control of, in past, 112-113; in dictatorships, 113-114

News-gathering, world facilities for, 110-111

Newspaper embargoes, 189-190

Newspapers, characteristics in United States, 137-143; characteristics in Europe, 143-145; non-journalistic influences on, 178-180, 182, 186-188

New York *Daily Mirror*, 142

New York *Daily News*, 142

New York *Evening Post*, 142, 143

New York *Herald Tribune*, 166

New York *Times*, 157, 178

New York *World*, 152

New Zealand, radio in, 91

Oberlaender Trust, 205

Oumansky, Constantin, 176

Pan-American Conference, 158

Pan American Union, 189

Pan-Pacific Association of journalists, 192

Panter, Noel, 191

Papen, Franz von, 150

"Peace and Honor" election, use of radio, 100

# Index

- Pell, Robert T., 72, 171, 176, 185, 186, 187  
Phipps, Sir Eric, 191  
Pognon, General Director of Havas, 117, 118  
Press Association (British), 124, 125, 127, 128  
Press associations, classification of, 115-116; Soviet Union, 116; Italy, 116; Germany, 116, 117; France, 117-124; Great Britain, 124-126; United States, 127-132, 136-187; Japan, 160. *See also* under names of associations  
Press bureaus, government, 114; in Germany, 149-150; in Italy, 151-153; in the Soviet Union, 153-154; in France, 154-155; in Cuba, 157-158; in China, 158-159; in Japan, 159-160; in Geneva (League of Nations), 162-166; conference of, Copenhagen, 1932, 171-177; Madrid, 1933, 185-188  
Press Congress of the World, 192-193  
Press experts, government, 114, 170-173, 185-188; at Geneva (League of Nations), 161, 162; diplomatic character of, 164-165  
Press Federation of America, 193  
Press messages, 71; rates, 78-80  
"Press Rate," 73, 77, 180-183  
Propaganda, non-journalistic, 199-208  
Pulitzer, Joseph, 143  
  
Radical movements, 16  
Radio, 37-47, 87-107; in World War, 31, 41-44; international agreements, 39, 102, 218; in Germany, 39-40, 87, 91-92, 96-100, 105; in France, 40, 91; in Great Britain, 40, 47-48, 92; in the United States, 42-56, 88; allocation of channels, 61, 82; in Soviet Union, 82, 92-93, 95, 102-103; in Japan, 82; statistics, 88; censorship of, 89-90; in Italy, 91; in New Zealand, 91; in Vatican City, 93, 104; League of Nations, 93; effectiveness of, 101; international broadcasts, 103-106; radio news services, 104, 105, 122  
Radio Corporation of America, 46, 50, 53, 216-217  
Radio News Service of America, 122  
Radio news services, 104, 105, 122  
Rayburn, Representative Sam, 55  
"Regional Press Understandings," 170  
Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse, Berlin, 174  
Religion, 15, 16, 19  
Reporters, function of, 115  
Reuter, Paul Julius, 124-125

# Mobilizing for Chaos

- Reuters agency, 121, 129, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 172; history, 124-125; services to England, 126; Far Eastern news, 126
- Richardson, H. M., 174-175
- "Ring Combination," change in reciprocal news exchange agreement, 121, 122, 134-136; description, 132-133
- Ritzau's Agency, 172
- Rollin, Léon, 123
- Romanticism, 7
- Roosevelt, Franklin D., 53, 101
- Roper, Daniel C., Roper Report, 53-55
- Rosenberg, M., 186, 187
- Rumania, 155
- Schools of journalism, 184, 192, 195
- Schreiner, G. A., 30, 31
- "Secret Language" telegraph messages, 76
- Seldes, George, 147, 190
- Sensationalism, 139-144
- Shearer, William B., 167
- Shimbun Rengo Sha (Rengo), 160
- Soviet Union, radio, 82, 92-93, 95-96, 102, 103; press associations, 116; control of press and correspondents in Russia, 153-154
- Spain, 155
- Spanish American War, 112
- Spry, Graham, 104
- Stamp, Sir Josiah, 101
- Steuben Society, 205
- St. Petersburg Telegraph Convention, 27, 60, 61, 63, 74
- Strassburger Foundation, 204
- Streit, Clarence, 178-182, 186
- Sweetser, Arthur, 162
- Sykes, Eugene O., 71, 74
- Syndicat National des Journalistes, Paris, 174
- Tass agency, 116, 188
- Telegraph, international agreements, 27-29, 60-84
- Telegraph Union, Bureau of, Berne, 60, 62, 75, 76
- Telegraphen-Union, 117, 172
- Terramare Office, 205
- Transocean Radio, 104
- Trans-Radio Press Service, 122
- Treaties, international, to control news, 176, 188-189



# Index

- Tribunal of Honor for journalists, 173-177, 178, 184, 185  
Tripartite Naval Conference, 167
- United Fruit Company, 46  
United Press, 70, 118, 127, 134, 136-137, 172, 185  
United States, cables, 23, 36; radio, 42-47, 49-56, 88; press associations, 127-132, 136-137; character of newspapers, 137-143; censorship, 211-213; survey of telecommunication companies, 216-217  
Universal Service, 172  
Uruguay, 158
- Valot, Stephen, 174, 176, 177, 185, 187  
Vatican City, 93, 104  
Verein der Ausländischen Presse zu Berlin, 193  
Viestnik agency, 116  
Vollbehr, Dr. Otto, 205
- Western Electric Company, 46  
Western Union Telegraph Company, 50, 53, 79, 80, 216-217  
Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, 46, 88  
White Act, 52  
Wilson, Woodrow, 34, 43, 45  
Wolffs Telegraphisches Büro, 116-117, 121, 132, 133, 134, 135, 188  
Wood, Major General Leonard, 131  
World War, radio in, 31, 41-44; cables in, 23-27; and news control, 113; propaganda technique, 199
- Young, Owen D., 45, 46  
Zamora, President, 106